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THE STRUGGLE FOR RESPECTABILITY: METHODISM AND
AFRO-CARIBBEAN CULTURE ON 19TH CENTURY NEVIS

One of the important results of missionary activity in the West Indies was the gradual transformation of the Afro-Caribbean people from the status of plantation stock to that of socially accepted human beings. By working towards a recognition of the humanity of the slaves the missionaries helped make way for the eventual emancipation of the slaves. The sort of humanity, however, which the missionaries envisioned for the slaves was, naturally, closely defined by the perceptions of the European societies from which they came.

In the case of the Methodists, who began their missionizing activities among slaves during the late 18th century, the promotion of respectability among the slaves was seen to be a crucial basis for their recognition and acceptance within the wider society. The concept of respectability, which was advocated by the Methodists, was informed by the cultural values of the emerging middle class of 18th-century British society, from whose ranks the missionaries came. It was, furthermore, directed against the "folk" cultural values of the lower classes from whose ranks the Methodist middle class emerged. Methodists, by and large, failed to recognize the importance of Afro-Caribbean culture as a basis of cultural identity among the slaves, which could be accorded public respectability. This is because this culture was not middle class European, at the same time as it resembled, in some respects, the mores of the lower class folk society against which Methodism reacted.

The Methodist mission therefore sheds light on one of the important ways in which Afro-Caribbean culture became marginalized at the expense of an English, Methodist cultural model of respectability. Moreover, it evinces the ways in which this affected the position of the Afro-Caribbean population in the

free society which emerged after the emancipation of the slaves. Since the role of respectability has been of some debate in present-day Caribbeanist scholarship, this historical anthropological study of the Methodist mission also relates to an important aspect of Caribbean studies.

METHODIST RESPECTABILITY AND SLAVE SOCIETY

The basis of the Methodist mission in the West Indies was the principle that "all men, including slaves, were brothers in Christ" (Blackman 1988: 4). This was not a generally accepted Christian dogma in the West Indies, when the Methodists began their mission after landing on Antigua on Christmas day in 1786. In fact, in the Eastern Caribbean the Moravian and Methodist churches were unique in recognizing the "black slaves, the free and the coloured people as equal with whites in the sight of God" (Blackman 1988: 2). It is important to recognize, however, that the brotherhood – or equality – that these missionaries offered the slaves, was not based upon a feeling of general, pan-human equality. They did not subscribe to the notion that all peoples and cultures, including all religions, must be respected as equal, nor did they challenge secular, this-worldly distinctions between master and slaves. In order to be admitted to the brotherhood of the Methodists, or the Moravians, it was necessary to be converted to Christianity, preferably their own version of it, and to accept the social order of this world.

The Methodist notion of brotherhood nevertheless had quite revolutionary implications when applied to British West Indian plantation society. The late 18th century, when the Methodists began missionizing among the slaves, was a period when the plantation economy based upon slavery was at its height. As the Jamaican sociologist Orlando Patterson has shown, this was an extreme form of chattel slavery where the slaves were regarded as mere beasts of burden, which were nothing but a part of the planters' private property, although a very important and valuable one. In order to fit this "nonhuman" position, the slave was cut off from "the social heritage of his ancestors and deprived of any personal honor and recognition" – the slaves were, in other words, regarded as "socially dead" (Patterson 1982: 5, 13, 46, 48; Kopytoff 1982).

For plantation society, any sort of mission which recognized the slaves as human beings, as "brothers in Christ", or perhaps even worse as "equal in the sight of God", therefore posed a serious threat to the established social order (Turner 1982: 196). Since this social order was a rather precarious one, in that it proved increasingly difficult to keep the slaves in their situation of social death, the missionaries came at a time, when a solution was needed to the growing problem of how to handle a large population which pressured for social

recognition. While the planters initially were hostile towards the missionaries, they began to tolerate them, if the missionaries were willing to work within the social system. To a certain extent the notion of respectability, which formed an important basis of the missionaries' concept of proper human relations, fit this purpose.

The idea of respectability emerged in Europe in the 18th century within the bourgeois segments of society. Concerned with the establishment of "'decent and correct' manners and morals, as well as the proper attitude toward sexuality" (Mosse 1985: 1), respectability became an important means by which the middle classes first legitimized and demarcated themselves, and later upheld their special status vis-a-vis the lower and upper classes (Mosse 1985: 9). Pietistic movements such as that of the Methodists gave religious support to the idea of respectability, and later in the 19th century, nationalistic movements adopted the middle class ideal of respectability and made it an ideological foundation of the new nations (Mosse 1985; Hempton 1984). Respectability, in other words, was invented to be a "traditional" way of life which provided an important moral and social underpinning of the new nationalism (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

The notion of respectability also has become an important basis of West Indian societies, associated with the norms of the European oriented middle classes. In the West Indies respectability remained largely confined to the relatively small middle class segments of the population and did not become the cultural foundation for the population as a whole to the extent that it did in Europe. The middle class, however, represented the highest level to which the free colored class and their equivalent in post-Emancipation society could reasonably aspire. Respectability therefore has become identified by the Afro-Caribbean population with high status in society at large, and has become a social ideal for the lower classes to aspire to.

This ideal has not gone unchallenged, however. Wilson has thus suggested that Caribbean societies contain two juxtaposed ideas of "respectability" and "reputation", which correspond, on the one hand, to the values of the official, legal society, delineated above, and, on the other, to those of the local, peasant communities (Wilson 1969: 70-84). He sees women and men as identifying differently with these values so that the female sphere, which is associated mainly with the domestic unit and the church, is most concerned with respectability, whereas the male sphere, located in the public arena of the rum shops and informal street corner gatherings, can be seen to be oriented towards reputation.

Wilson's ideas have been further developed in Roger Abrahams' studies of Caribbean folklore and ritual, which he argues often take the form of a symbolic struggle between societal forms of respectability and local cultural concepts of

reputation, expressed in a conflict between respectability as form and reputation as content (Abrahams 1983). Like Wilson, he also views women as the guardians of respectability concerned with the perceived appearance of the domestic unit within the wider society, and as less involved in those activities in the local community which are associated with reputation (Abrahams 1983: 152-53).

Implied in this juxtaposition of respectability and reputation is a view of respectability as a foreign element being imposed from the larger, external society and of reputation as an authentic concept generated locally in peasant communities which have been relatively isolated from the wider society (Wilson 1969: 83). This leads to the impression that women have chosen to identify with European values, whereas men are the upholders of Afro-Caribbean community values. However, as argued by Sutton (1974), the complex of values found in Caribbean communities has developed in close association with colonial and neocolonial power structures over which the Afro-Caribbean population has had little control. Furthermore, women as well as men have been subject to these colonial displays of power. This suggests that the present-day tendency for men and women to engage in different forms of cultural expression, as described by Wilson and Abrahams, should not necessarily be seen to reflect a situation where men are more oriented towards local values, whereas women are inclined to support colonial, societal values. Rather, it should be interpreted as a result of the different access to public institutions that men and women have experienced as a result of the colonial gender structures which were imposed on them in the post-emancipation era.

By analyzing the concept of respectability within the historical context in which it was introduced to the Caribbean, I shall try to demonstrate that the role of respectability in Caribbean societies must be examined from the point of view of a cultural struggle between colonial and local interests in which men and women were equally involved. This struggle centered on attempts, on the part of the colonial authorities, to control the Afro-Caribbean population by integrating them via social institutions of respectability, and, on the part of the Afro-Caribbean population, on the employment, or appropriation, of these socially recognized institutions of respectability as a means of displaying their culture in a society which refused to grant this culture any public recognition.

On the basis of records from the Methodist Missionary Society this article presents a case study of the Methodist pursuit of respectability on the Leeward Island of Nevis; the reactions to these efforts on the part of the Afro-Caribbean population, and the relevance of 19th-century Methodist notions of respectability to the later development of cultural identity on the island.¹ From a historical anthropological perspective I shall show how the tradition of respectability, which was introduced to the Afro-Caribbean population primarily through

English Methodist missionaries, "went native" in the West Indies; and how its institutions were unmade and appropriated into West Indian custom as a pattern of social practices constituting "respectability". This respectability therefore became at one and the same time an expression of Afro-Caribbean identity and an institutionalized means of seeking recognition in the wider Euro-Caribbean society.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE METHODIST MISSION ON NEVIS

The Methodist mission began on Nevis, when Dr. Coke and his fellow missionaries visited the island from Antigua in January 1787 (Coke 1811: 12).² William Hammer worked on Nevis and gradually persuaded individual planters to let him preach for the slaves on the estates. When Dr. Coke returned to Nevis in 1789, a class of 21 catechumens had been established on the island, and in 1790, when he paid his last visit, a chapel had been secured in the capital Charlestown (Coke 1811: 13-14). The Methodist "society" (the term which the Methodists preferred to the term "church") grew rapidly to a membership of nearly 400 in 1793 and almost 1200 in 1803, the latter figure representing more than 10% of the total population.³ At that time the Methodists had erected two other chapels in the Gingerland and Newcastle areas of the island, and two missionaries were usually stationed on the island. Despite the growing importance of the chapels, the Methodists continued to go out to the slaves on those estates where planters were willing to allow this, in order to recruit new slaves for the faith. They generally came every two weeks, preaching either in the estate yard under a big tree, or in the boiling house, which was fitted into a chapel for the occasion. Often the manager or planter was present during the service.⁴

The Methodist church on Nevis appears to have been organized much as it is today. When slaves expressed a wish to join the society, they were placed in classes (first on trial) under a leader who reported to the minister on the members' progress or problems. Apart from attendance at class meetings and the regular services in the chapels, the members also were expected to go to the quarterly "love feasts", where they could bear testimony to their conversion, and to "watch nights", where the congregation prayed together in silence. These watch nights often were held on special occasions such as New Year's eve. A condition of membership was payment of class money and admission tickets to the church (Goveia 1965: 292). Those who could afford it paid extra for a pew.⁵ Membership in the Methodist society therefore reflected a certain economic standing among the slaves, and those slaves who were unable to pay their dues

often chose to stay home to avoid the shame of coming empty handed to church. During hard times, such as droughts, attendance therefore declined markedly.⁶

An important avenue for attracting new members was the Sunday School, where the children were instructed in the Bible. The Sunday Schools later developed into proper schools, and in 1818, the two Methodist missionaries on Nevis noted that they had established a morning school from 6 to 7, where children were taught to "read, spell, sing and the catechism". This school, however, was in dire need of Testaments and spelling books.⁷ Only two years later, the day school in Charlestown had been expanded from 6 to 8 in the morning and had about 100 children, 60 or 70 of whom attended regularly.⁸ This education was gradually expanded and schools were established in other parts of the island.⁹

WORKING WITHIN THE PLANTATION SOCIETY

Apparently the initial reaction on the part of the planter class towards the Methodists' attempt to missionize among the slaves was that of disbelief and ridicule. On the neighboring island of Antigua, where the mission first began its activities, the upper class expressed the opinion that the missionaries might as well "try to turn ... mules and oxen into men as make Christians out of ... slaves" (Gumbs 1986: 39). There is no doubt, however, that this ridicule disguised a real fear that Christian missionizing among slaves would disturb the delicate social order. This was made clear by William Smith (1745: 230), an Anglican minister on Nevis earlier in the 1700s:

When a Slave is once Christened, he conceits that he ought to be upon a level with his Master, in all other respects; in consequence whereof, he presumes, that if his Master corrects him, for ever so great a Fault, he is at full liberty to send him out of the World, by a Dose of Poison ... if even the whole Country was so mad, as to set about such an odd Conversion, the effect would then be a general Rebellion, and Massacre, of us Whites. This is Truth ...

This fear of the effects of Christening slaves was still prevalent in the late 1700s. The missionaries on Nevis were met with skepticism, which turned into hostility when the planters suspected the missionaries of being connected with the English abolitionists and of supporting Wilberforce's parliamentary campaign. Attempts were made to "intimidate the missionary and members of the society and a mob tried to burn their chapel over their heads" (Goveia 1965: 291, 295). This persecution stopped, however, and in 1805 one of the missionaries could report, "the principal Inhabitants have treated me with respect".¹⁰

One of the major reasons why the Methodists became accepted was that they succeeded in reassuring most of the white population that far from being agents of revolutionary change, they were a stabilizing force in the plantation society. The 1821 report of the Methodist Missionary Society thus makes clear that the Methodists were being accepted because they were helping to keep the increasingly restless slaves quiet by giving them a more divine purpose to live for. The report notes with great satisfaction that "open opposition to the efforts of the Missionaries has ceased" and goes on to state that "nothing but prudent and persevering exertions are necessary, under the divine blessing, to fix in the minds of the slaves generally the sanctifying truths of our holy religion, to bring their conduct under its salutary control, and thus at once to promote their present happiness, and to fix the peace and security of the colonies upon the surest foundations" (Report 1821: lxxxi).

This role of the missionaries as institutors of social order in colonial society was made clear in a letter from 1823 by two missionaries on Nevis, which stated: "truly religious Negroes become in general so much reconciled to their providential lot as to indulge but little anxiety respecting any great political change in their outward condition".¹¹ Whatever feelings of repugnance the missionaries held against slavery had to be confined to privacy in order to promote the greater missionary cause.¹²

METHODIST AND AFRO-CARIBBEAN CULTURE

Although the basis of Methodist missionizing among the slaves was that of equality in the sight of God, the Methodists believed that heathen slaves, who had not been exposed to any civilizing influence, had a very low level of understanding. One missionary writing in 1837, a few years after emancipation, thus noted that one could not expect as much of the "Negroes" as of the Englishmen with regard to understanding of religion, because they were "extremely ignorant, degraded almost to the level of beasts, oppressed and cruelly treated by their owners".¹³ Apparently it did not dawn on this missionary that the Afro-Caribbean population, despite this deprivation, might have developed a cultural system which provided a different basis for religious practice and understanding. This is related to the fact that the missionaries, as noted, in their work with the slaves emphasized those cultural values and norms of behavior that would meet with respectability in the wider society. They therefore were not particularly eager to reconcile Methodism to the Afro-Caribbean culture, which had developed among the slaves at the time the missionaries began their work on the island.

Religious Beliefs and Practices

One fundamental obstacle to Methodist missionizing among the slaves was presented by the religious practices and beliefs of the latter. The records indicate that the slaves had an essentially different concept of man and the supernatural. To them, it seems that man was basically "good" and not a sinful creature in need of salvation by God (Turner 1982: 71). One woman, refusing to attend the missionaries' preaching, indicated that she just did not see any reason why they should need to save her: "Massa me no muroter, no kill, me trouble nobody, me no sinner massa, me no used prayers massa".¹⁴ This failure to see man as basically a sinner is also apparent in this letter which expresses almost complete frustration on the part of the missionary:

I have been utter astonished at the darkness and ignorance which covered their minds. Many who have attended the house of God for numbers of years know no more of their state as Sinners, or of the plan of Salvation than the beasts which perish. And I find it exceeding difficult to get them to understand what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, before they can enter the kingdom of Heaven, however after giving them what instruction I can, I commend them to God who alone can enlighten the mind of man. And as to the pride of these people, it exceeds all I have seen before and appears to be increasing every day.¹⁵

Whereas the slaves' stubborn clinging to unchristian beliefs was frustrating, their continued practice of witchcraft, or obeah, was regarded as even more serious, since this was a more visible display of their heathenism. Since obeah was illegal, those who were caught using it were punished. Apparently, the punishment sometimes consisted of the slave being confronted with the Methodist missionary, who made them kneel down and repeat the Lord's prayer. In one case, where the switch had to be used to make an old obeah man do this, he at first refused to repeat "Thy Kingdom come", jumping up and shouting "'Me no Kingdom come!, no kingdom! Me no Kingdom come!'"¹⁶

The Provision Grounds

One of the aspects of slave culture that the missionaries were forced to give a certain amount of recognition was the Afro-Caribbean system of small farming; if for no other reason, than that it provided an important economic basis for the Methodist Society. The slaves' system of small farming, however, is almost only referred to when it failed to provide enough funds for the missionaries. This occurred most often, when there was a serious drought on the island, which made it impossible for the slaves to grow sufficient crops in their small lots on the plantations' marginal land to feed their own families, let alone the missionaries.¹⁷ This lack of sufficient funds had, as noted, the further

consequence that the slaves stopped attending the chapel, or even left the Methodist Society altogether.¹⁸

The central role of the provision grounds in the lives of the slaves is apparent in one of the testimonies of several slaves "living and dying in God" which were sent from Nevis in 1802 to the Methodist Missionary Society in London. One of the testimonies relates how the old slave Bean, when he thought he was dying, blessed a son of his and used the image of the plentiful provision ground to convince his son of the prosperity he would achieve if he adopted a Christian life. Bean took his son by the hand and said:

... God bless you my child. Take care to be a good boy. I have set you a good example, follow your Father to heaben, keep from ebery ting dat is sinfa and God will bless on you, if you save him good heart make ebery thing prosa you take in you hand, when you plant cassada he make um come up good when you plant tanja when you plant potatoes he send rain from heben and he grow good.¹⁹

While missionaries were taken by the "simplicity and heavenly mindedness" which were revealed in this statement, which had the effect that the son promised "amendment of life and to attend the chapel", they showed little understanding of the cultural importance of small farming, implicit in such a statement. Furthermore they displayed a startling lack of knowledge of the agricultural skills and capabilities of the slaves. One missionary thus was shocked when he learned that the slaves were not ignorant savages, but knew as much as he did about the cycles of the moon and the weather believed to be associated with these cycles, important knowledge for small farmers. This dawned on him, when he was seeking shelter in a shed along with several slaves:

I observed we shall have a new moon tonight & perhaps a change of weather. He [a slave] replied 'Yes massa, we shall.' He then spoke of the times when there would be a new moon and I asked him how it was that the negroes who cannot read, know as well as us who can, the exact changes of the moon? He replied that there was nothing they knew better & added 'We count days & look at times' ... he proceeded to notice the various positions of the moon & its appearances, and described the conclusions to which they arrived from such observations, as to what kind of weather would follow ...²⁰

The Markets

The missionaries paid considerably more attention to the slaves' markets, for the simple reason that they were held on Sundays, the only available free time for the slaves. This meant that the markets represented a serious break of the Sabbath. While earlier in the history of the island society all shops were kept

open on Sundays, by the 1800s most of the shops owned by the white population remained closed on Sundays.²¹ In this way, the slaves' markets were stigmatized by the very fact that they were forced to take place on Sundays. Some of the missionaries sympathized with the slaves' lot and saw in the markets an opportunity to spread the gospel to those slaves who did not attend the chapel. They therefore went to the market place itself and preached for the people there:

As the Negroes did not come to the chapel to hear us I have thought it my duty to go to them. Accordingly I went & preached in the Market after preaching in the forenoon in the chapel on the sabbath day which is nearly at an equal distance from church & chapel. When the negroes saw me entering the Market with the Hymn Book in my hand they immediately cleared away all their provisions for the accommodation of the congregation & almost the whole of the negroes surrounded me like a swarm of Bees & heard with seriousness & attention. I ascended an old wall at the side of the Market which I made my Pulpit. In this situation I stood whilst a pious old negroe held an umbrella over me to keep my head from the effects of a vertical sun. It is impossible for me to tell you with what pleasure I made the trumpet sound forth the glad-tidings of great joy to my black & coloured brethren who summoned to receive the word with a smiling conveyance of gratitude to God & man. One of the Negroes cried out when I began to sing O! Me never saw like! He be good Massa! – Me don't know where he be come from! – O! God bless good Massa! – Another poor woman like the woman at Jacob's well forgot her provisions at the other end of the market and came & joined the congregation.²²

Other missionaries were not just against the market, because it took place on Sundays, but also because they saw in it an ungodly place where a sort of language and behavior was displayed which was entirely unsuitable for respectable adults – and children:

Slave children at ca. six years old, or under, are employed picking grass for the cattle, vines for hogs and rabbits and this they do daily from light to dark. On the Sundays, their parents, or some other relations wash, and put a clean frock or shirt upon them and take them to Market. Here they see and hear nothing good everything bad, for slaves without the fear of God, can use, when offended the most obscond language.²³

There were two market places on the island, in Charlestown and Gingerland, and they attracted several hundred persons every Sunday.²⁴ They seem to have been not just places of trade, but important areas of social intercourse among the slaves, and many lingered in the area of the market place after the trade had stopped, talking and drinking. For the missionaries it therefore was humiliating to see members of his congregation mingle with the crowd at the market after having attended service in their chapels.²⁵

Music and Dance

The social life which took place among the slaves in the markets early on Sundays continued on the plantations where the slaves gathered in the afternoon to dance to the music of the fiddle and tambourine. This sort of entertainment was seen as being incompatible with the Methodist faith, and one missionary noted with regret that "Sunday dancing is much more common than preaching, and the houses that are regularly open for this wicked and disgraceful purpose are more in number than places of worship".²⁶ The Methodist reports are filled with descriptions of missionaries having entered dances held either in private houses or in the open in order to break them up.²⁷ As the Methodist society became more established, the missionaries took a more aggressive stand and expelled those members known to participate in this social activity.

The Family

One area of the slaves' culture which the missionaries were most eager to reform, because it was a blow to any sort of respectability envisioned by them, was the slaves' practice of cohabiting without being married. In the early period of their missionizing activities on Nevis, the Methodists confined themselves to "joining" slaves who were cohabiting. This was an informal ceremony, which was not considered to constitute a real marriage. Apparently the slaves did not regard it as such; neither were the joined slaves recorded in a register. In 1819, the Methodists began performing official marriages of slaves, and in 1822, cohabiting members of the society were required to marry.²⁸ The bans of the couple were published in the church, as was done for the white population in the Anglican church, and as far as the Methodists were concerned these marriages were completely valid.²⁹

This raising of the slaves' marital unions to an official level of respectability on par with the whites proved to be too much of a provocation to the white population. In 1828 a marriage act was passed on Nevis, granting only the clergy of the church of England and Ireland permission to perform marriages of legal significance. The marriages which the Methodists already had performed were regarded as illegal, and the Anglican clergy remarried several persons married in the Methodist church to others.³⁰ The marriage bill was kept in effect until 1842 and was clearly seen as a means of keeping the ambitious Methodists in check:

Some of our respectable people who have a house to live in – a horse to ride and other property are looked in the face by some of the opponents and then told by them that the Marriage in the chapel is not good and if they did they cannot make a will and leave their

property to their wives because they are nothing more than concubines and their children bastards.³¹

In the eagerness to establish a "proper" marriage among members of their congregation, the Methodists seem to have ignored the fact that the slaves' family system perhaps was not so much based on the marital union as such, as on the wider, consanguineal family. The references which appear to this sort of family therefore are only indirect, such as the description of the father who called a son to his deathbed to give him his blessing referred to above. The importance of kinsmen is apparent in other descriptions of deaths, with relatives gathering around the dying person³² and in cases concerning family loyalty, often only noted because loyalty to the family proved stronger than loyalty to the Methodist church.³³

THE STRUGGLE FOR RESPECTABILITY AFTER EMANCIPATION

Despite the frustrations often felt by the missionaries over their "stubborn" congregation, who refused to change their ways, the Nevisians were not untouched by the efforts of the missionaries at converting them to respectable citizens in society. The way in which the Nevisians vied for this respectability depended on the social and economic status they had achieved by the time of emancipation in 1834. For analytical purposes the Nevisians can be divided into two major groups: the small rising middle class of small property owners, and the large lower class of plantation laborers.

The Local Elite of the Middle Class

By the time of emancipation, a group of "most respectable" people had emerged within the Methodist Society who had acquired "a house to live in – a horse to ride and other property", and who were most upset about being told that they lived in concubinage and had bastard children, whom they could not make provisions for in wills. This class of people had arisen among the more privileged of the Afro-Caribbean population, such as those who possessed special marketable skills, for example artisans; those who engaged in trade activities, and those who were the offspring of mixed white/black unions and therefore had special access to the upper echelons of society. During the last 26 years before emancipation, a total of 320 slaves were manumitted (Higman 1984: 689).

For this group of people, the Methodist Society represented an institution in which they could assume leadership as "class leaders", local preachers, and later

fully ordained preachers. This group of people, who had been among the first to take advantage of the Methodist teaching on the island, also found positions as school teachers, when the educational system was expanded at the time of emancipation to accommodate the increasing number of children seeking education. In the early 1840s, these local teachers began to receive training at a college in Antigua.³⁴ As active participants in the Methodist church and schools they helped establish Methodist patterns of respectability as the basis of social standing in the community.

The modest and temperate style of life associated with English Methodism was strongly impressed upon the Nevisian congregation in Charlestown at the celebration of emancipation day in the chapel in 1839, which was orchestrated by the missionary in collaboration with the "class leaders". The freed population apparently regarded emancipation day on the 1st of August as their "Christmas", and in order to prevent them from engaging in the drinking and carousing usually associated with Christmas, a Society meeting was called at two in the afternoon on emancipation day. Fourteen hundred showed up for the event, which probably was as different from Christmas carousing as possible:

The arrangement was that all must have Society tickets to get admission and upon their admission they were to go to the part of the chapel and take their seats just in the same order as when they are met in class. This was done. Each leader was then at the direction of the preacher to wait upon his or her members and present to each one two cakes and a little water. This was done in a quiet and orderly manner after I had addressed our people on about fifteen virtues such as ... piety, prayer, Love, Honesty, Faithfulness to their engagements etc. etc. After we had done this, we then in a very solemn imposing and respectable manner renewed our covenant with God in much the same manner as at the close of the year.³⁵

No wonder the missionary later in the report could relate that "it has been said by many of the gentlemen in this colony that Methodism is the principal cause of that good order which has prevailed." This serving of cake and non-alcoholic drink was also common at tea meetings, which became popular at this time at gatherings which were "sober, spiritual and tended to godliness", and therefore provided occasions where the people could enjoy "the pleasures of Religion and Sociality together." At the same time, the tea meetings helped raise funds for worthy causes such as the new schools.³⁶

The following year a procession of the Sunday School was held by the Methodists which went through Charlestown and into the market place by the court house where a song was performed. This procession displayed good order, modesty and proper appearances in combination with loyalty to the British throne:

... they were arranged in order for walking under the care of their teacher. I then took my place at the head of them and immediately followed the biggest boy belonging to the day schools with a large Flag with the following motto 'Wesleyan Infant School - Fear God and Honour the Queen'. Among the Boys were two more small flags with the following words 'Loyalty' and 'Modesty'. Then at a given distance there were two similar flags with these words 'Temperance' 'honesty' inscribed on them. I suppose there were nearly 400 children. Boys and girls all smartly clothed. The boys had caps and straw hats, Jackets and Trousers. Shoes and stockings almost without an exception. The girls were all in white, many with bonnet and almost every one with shoes and stockings. I can assure you it was a lovely solemn attractive sight.³⁷

Not just the Sunday School, but also the day school emphasized the importance of a "decent appearance". Thus, at the boys school in Charlestown the rule that the pupils had to wear "a jacket and trousers" was strictly adhered to.³⁸

In 1840, the marriage bill, which had prevented Methodists from performing marriages, was reconsidered in the local assembly which represented mainly white planter interests. The increasing respectability of the Methodist church in the society and the rapid advancement of the Black middle class associated with it were perceived as a threat by some of the assembly members. One member thus criticized the Methodists for advancing "the doctrine of equality", saying that they wished to "give to those who have black skins and coloured skins white skin", and the Methodists were accused of teaching "the people to interfere with the politics of the country" and "to aspire to offices for which they are not competent, even that of President".³⁹ At this time, however, the Methodists had won the day - they had shown their usefulness in providing an orderly English model of behavior for the Black population to emulate - and the marriage bill was revoked. The Methodists finally had become completely established, and their notions of respectability had become an important basis of social standing in free society.⁴⁰

It seems, however, that it was only a fairly small minority in the church, which succeeded in living up to the conventions of respectability expected by the Methodists. While the members of congregation were eager to participate in church affairs, the missionaries' letters, journals and reports are filled with despairing commentaries on the members' succumbing to such evils as dancing, drinking, licentiousness, fornication, and heathenish superstition.⁴¹ These practices were most embarrassing, when they involved the local middle class and leadership in the church. One missionary thus resolved to stop holding tea meetings, because they were frequented by "orators" who used them to "talk of their being Means of Grace", whereas they were steeped in what he regarded as "Dissipation and Immorality".⁴² It therefore seems that even though the middle class subscribed to Methodist ideals, and validated their position through them, they found it difficult to reconcile these ideals with their everyday life.

We may find the reason for this difficulty in the fact that adherence to the Methodist ideas and culture implicated a total denial of the Afro-Caribbean culture out of which the middle class had emerged. This is apparent in the nomination of a local school teacher who was admitted for training to become a fully ordained minister in the Methodist Society in 1868. It reads: "He is black – but of very superior ability. He is a thorough student, shrewd & acute, possesses good preaching talent. There is no negroism about him either in speech or manners. He has command of excellent English".⁴³ The good Methodists and leaders of the emerging elite thus were to be Negroes with no "negroism about them", or as stated by the member of the Nevis legislature quoted above, Blacks who were given "white skin". Most members of the middle class formally expressed their social position by assuming leadership roles in church, occupying the front pews in the main body of the chapel, or just being regularity itself in attendance.

The Lower Class

While the middle class struggled to maintain the appearance of respectability by seemingly adopting English Methodist conventions as their own cultural traditions, the vast majority of the Afro-Caribbean population who belonged to the lower class of plantation laborers chose an opposite strategy in their search for respectability. Rather than pretending to abandon their Afro-Caribbean culture, they appear to have attempted to remove this culture, or at least certain aspects of it, from its marginalized, "immoralized" position in society. They did this partly by conforming to Methodist conventions, partly by adapting the Methodist traditions to their own conventions. The change of the market day from Sunday to Saturday, which the freed made without interference from the authorities, though prompted by the missionaries, is an example of accommodation to the Methodists.⁴⁴ By holding market on Saturdays, the free were not just assured that they could attend church at their own leisure, but they also removed the stigma attached to the market because of its former association with slavery and the breaking of the Sabbath in public.

This larger segment of the Nevisian population also struggled to gain a respectable position in society by appropriating cultural forms, associated with established institutions such as the Methodist Society, and using them to display their cultural values and practices, i.e. their Afro-Caribbean identity. The special Nevisian version of holding tea meetings, which has been analyzed by Roger Abrahams (1983), is an example of this practice. Beginning with the earliest Methodist records from the period of slavery, the missionaries have noted the eagerness of the members of the congregation to speak at the love feasts; their oratory talents, and the great assertiveness with which they expressed

themselves. Furthermore, the slaves were taking advantage of these love feasts to make public their plight as slaves, which made the missionaries extremely nervous.⁴⁵

By the latter part of the 1800s, when the tea meetings also presented opportunities for testimonies, this oration had gotten out of hand, as far as one of the missionaries was concerned, in that the meetings had become occasions for the display of great orations the flourishes of which bore little resemblance to the modest and temperate life advocated by the Methodists. One orator thus was described as having an "appearance equal to deceiving the most elect deputation that ever touched and glanced on every land!"⁴⁶ The Afro-Caribbean performative talents clearly were taking over the scene, in the process changing it to something that the missionary did not wish to be associated with.

Out of such tea meetings grew entirely different "tea meetings", which were organized by the Nevisians themselves. These involved a court of a king and queen and their attendants who sat at the head table, while a number of orators made various performances of speeches or poems under the direction of a toast master. This toast master himself held long speeches, which included Latin phrases, riddles and play on words, and it was his task to keep control over the audience, which participated actively in the event, laughing, joking, and jeering, when mistakes were made on the scene. This tea meeting has been described as a struggle between the Afro-Caribbean and the Euro-Caribbean cultures, or as a struggle between reputation in the local community and respectability in the wider society, with the most successful tea meetings being those where the toast masters manage to keep a delicate balance between the two (Abrahams 1983: 10-18, 112-21). The tea meetings thus seem to have represented attempts to maintain a respectable appearance while displaying Afro-Caribbean culture.

Another example of this attempt at combining Methodist form with Afro-Caribbean content is found in the Noahite movement. This movement emerged in 1839, the year after the abolishment of the apprentice system following emancipation of the slaves. It was started by a newly freed man, who called himself Noah and proclaimed to be a "Prophet" and a "Comforter" and started preaching and holding meetings "till a late hour", attracting congregations of several hundred persons.⁴⁷ At these services, or meetings, which were held every Sunday, quotations from the Scriptures, the Apostles' Creed and verses of John Wesley's Hymns were important elements along with dreams, prophecies, various declamations as well as "extravagant dance in which the body is violently tilted and tossed till violent convulsions ensue". The culmination of the service was "one tumultuous roaring from the vehement mass of devotees; men, women and children writhing and rocking in wonderful confusion".⁴⁸

The Methodists became increasingly concerned over this movement, which apparently drew participants from all over the island, including members of the

Methodist Society. While some of the English missionaries dismissed the religion as "absurd and laughable" and thought it curious that "people should be found in this state in the midst of a civilized community", the local preachers were more uneasy about this "grossly ignorant perversion of Christianity" and wrote to the Methodist Missionary Society in order to make it take a more aggressive stand against the evil. It seems that to these local preachers, leading members of the respectable community on the island, such a bold display of Afro-Caribbean culture through the appropriation and transformation of the Methodist service was too much of a challenge to the established order and respectability of the society.

During the 1870s, the Methodists succeeded in wiping out the Noahite movement through concerted preaching efforts in the area where it was located. This resulted only in a brief respite, however. Early in the 20th century, other religious institutions willing to incorporate Afro-Caribbean cultural practices into their services began missionizing on the island. One of the most important among these was the Pilgrim Holiness Church, an American offshoot of the Methodist church, which arrived in 1909. The missionaries from this church attracted a large following by holding services with lively singing accompanied by tambourines – one of the Afro-Caribbean instruments that the missionaries had expended great energy to condemn as sinful. Interviews suggested that this church recruited Methodists who had not been able to achieve the sort of leadership role in the Methodist church hierarchy to which they aspired, as well as some of the poorer people who never felt "at home" in the Methodist or Anglican churches. This church had come to stay, and it was followed by many other churches, who, in various ways, were willing to allow the Afro-Caribbean culture to receive expression within a respectable institutional framework.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between the English Methodists and the Afro-Caribbean population was one informed by different cultural frameworks as well as different class interests. The rising middle class, which established itself at the time of emancipation, seems to have adopted the English Methodist cultural values and practices of respectability as their own, using them as a mark of their elevation in society. By attempting to fit so neatly into a foreign cultural form in order to validate their special position in society, the members of this elite were making a formalized English Methodist tradition the basis of their daily life. In this way they ran the risk of becoming entirely appropriated by this tradition and its makers.

The vast majority of the Afro-Caribbean population belonging to the lower echelons of society did not adopt the English Methodist culture as their own, as did the middle class, partly because they did not have the economic or cultural wherewithal to master it, partly because they held on to their Afro-Caribbean culture. They were not untouched by the Methodist notions of respectability, however, but employed the forms of the English Methodist traditions as an institutional framework in which they could display their own culture and identity and thus seek recognition in society. The Afro-Caribbean lower class, in other words, sought to externalize, and thus display, their culture through cultural forms of the wider society such as those offered by the English Methodist church.⁴⁹

Because of the indirect nature in which the lower class of the Afro-Caribbean population was able to display its culture before and after freedom, its cultural expression was of necessity more "subtle" and "invisible" (Price 1985: 24-26; Safa 1988: 117-18) than was that of the upper class. The involvement in European-oriented institutions of respectability therefore does not necessarily imply support of the European values and submission to the system of oppression that they are associated with, as Wilson's interpretation leads one to believe. Quite the contrary, by separating form and content, and externalizing their culture through foreign form, in the process transforming the forms, the Afro-Caribbean people managed to keep their culture alive, at the same time as they institutionalized it. By doing this, they demonstrated the way in which colonial, invented tradition can be appropriated by those it was meant to control and sometimes even turned against those who invented it.

NOTES

1. This article is a revised version of papers presented at the Institute of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen (1989), the Society for Caribbean Studies Thirteenth Annual Conference, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, England (1989), and The Third World Plantation Conference, University of Southwestern Louisiana, Bunkie, Louisiana, USA (1989). I wish to thank participants in these meetings as well as Sally and Richard Price for their comments. The article is part of a larger study on Afro-Caribbean cultural identity which is based on fieldwork among Nevisians in the West Indies, USA and England, as well as research in archives in Nevis and London. This has been supported by the Danish Research Council for Research in Developing Countries and the University of Copenhagen.

2. For further discussions of missionary activities in the British West Indies, see Smith (1950), Rooke (1979), and Turner (1982).

3. Coke 1811: 13-14. C 1: March 8, 1803. Higman 1984: 417-18.

4. C 432: 27 September, 1831.
5. C 166: 24 April, 1822.
6. C 28: 20 January, 1814.
7. C 66: 30 April, 1818.
8. C 113: 16 May, 1820.
9. C 28: 20 January, 1814. C 232: 20 July, 1825. C 267: 12 January 1826. C 482: 8 October, 1833.
10. C 6: 7 August, 1805.
11. C 203: 20 October, 1823.
12. See for example C 123: 2 October, 1820. Turner 1982: 9.
13. CA 994: 11 September, 1837.
14. C 363: 3 December, 1828.
15. C 579: 18 March, 1837.
16. C 154: 16 November, 1821.
17. C 96: 20 July, 1819. C 584: 10 May, 1837.
18. C 28: 20 January, 1814.
19. C 25: 21 May, 1802.
20. C 355: 28 August, 1828.
21. C 1: 7 May, 1803.
22. C 261: 24 March, 1825.
23. C 255: 30 October, 1824.
24. C 301: 26 March, 1827. C 330: 7 January, 1828.
25. C 449: 3 May, 1832.
26. C 413: 16 December, 1830.
27. C 363: 4 December, 1828. C 55: 28 February, 1 May, 1820. C 361: 3 November, 1828.
28. C 203: 20 October, 1823.

29. C 171: 5 August, 1822. C 175: 10 October, 1822.
30. C 357: 9 October, 1828.
31. CA 1013: September, 1841 (the exact date is not listed).
32. C 363: 4 December, 1828. C 380: 3 August, 1829.
33. C 380: 3 August, 1829.
34. CA 1028: 18 May, 1843.
35. CA 1006: 2 August, 1839.
36. CA 1013: 26 October, 1840. CA 1019: 15 September, 1841.
37. CA 1012: 7 August, 1840.
38. CA 1020: 1 January, 1842.
39. CA 1012: September, 1840 (the exact date is not listed).
40. CA 1020: 1 January, 1842.
41. For example, CA 1019: 15 September, 1841. CA 1068: 13 March, 1852. CA 1130: 8 June, 1861. CA 1132: 10 September, 1861.
42. CA 1132: 10 September, 1861.
43. CA 1189: 10 July, 1868.
44. C 487: 3 August, 1834. C 506: 22 August, 1834.
45. C 25: 21 May, 1802. C 227: 10 May, 1825. B 55: 9 April, 1820.
46. C 1132: 10 September, 1861.
47. CA 1003: 8 April, 1839. CA 1004: 10 June, 1839. CA 1016: 2 April, 1841.
48. CA 1172: 11 June, 1866. CA 1220: 26 February, 1872.
49. In this way their efforts were parallel to those of the Kwaio studied by Roger Keesing (1982, 1985), who have attempted to externalize and codify their culture as "kastom" by having it put on paper by, among others, anthropologists.

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INKLE AND YARICO: THE CONSTRUCTION OF ALTERITY
FROM HISTORY TO LITERATURE¹

First related in Richard Ligon's *True and Exact History of the island of Barbadoes* (1657), the narrative of Inkle and Yarico immediately held English readers' imagination with its strange captive power.² For at least another century and a half, this troubling image of New World innocence and beauty crassly commodified by Old World greed and deceit stirred their consciousness to the profound philosophical issues involved in European expansion into the Americas and Africa. But while Ligon's history provided the original from which subsequent versions were derived, the tragic plot of an Indian maid betrayed and abandoned by an English traveller may be traced to a much earlier source.

The earliest analogue of this story appears in Jean Mocquet's *Voyages* (1616), where the Indian woman, outraged by the Englishman's desertion, dismembers her child and flings parts of its body after his departing ship. Ligon's account follows next in chronological order, but differs radically from its antecedent, in that Ligon offers his as an authentic historical narrative, with the historian himself as eyewitness (Ligon lived in the Barbados household where Yarico served as a slave) and the Indian woman and her familiars as informants.

Adding a considerable amount of narrative detail and emotional colour, Sir Richard Steele exposed an even larger audience to the motive power of Yarico's plight in the eleventh paper of the *Spectator*, published March 13, 1711.³ That periodical's estimated circulation of sixty to eighty thousand readers at the time played no small part in boosting the narrative's popularity.

Some three quarters of a century later, the enduring power of this story's appeal translated into phenomenal success for George Colman the Younger. His three-act operatic play *Inkle and Yarico* opened at the Haymarket on 4 August

1787. Five weeks later, at the end of the season, the play had seen some twenty performances, and thirteen years later, at century's end, it had registered a total of 164 performances, divided between runs at the Haymarket and at Covent Garden. Its obvious audience appeal was reflected in this 1795 characterization by Thomas Bellamy: "The tale is known to all: Simplicity has placed its stamp on *Yarico*! The stage receives her. Colman's classic pen has raised the interesting scene, to last till time and Nature close and ALL IS STILL."⁴

Successive generations of English audiences obviously responded to the stirrings of Enlightenment liberal ideology that intensified as the century proceeded; Inkle's civilized cynicism and materialistic motivations are sharply counterpointed against *Yarico*'s simplicity and innocence. The story's plot provided authors a fitting context in which to prosecute the reformations of historiography legitimized by the defined procedures of institutions like the Royal Society and supported by scholars and thinkers like Bacon, Hobbes and Bolingbroke in England, and Voltaire, Montesquieu and other *philosophes* in France. As the Inkle and *Yarico* narrative evolves from historical source to literary artifact, it exemplifies certain distinctive transformational processes that were taking place in the domain of letters, shaping the philosophical discourse about Self and Other.

This article proposes to examine how the principal narratives of Ligon, Steele and Colman provide a basis for studying the textualization and transformation of private history into public myth, and how the implicit issues of alterity – of race, gender and authorial differences – are constructed into a discourse on value and the triumph of a new, emergent sensibility.

Abstracted from its larger historical frame of reference, Ligon's narrative of Inkle and *Yarico* reads like a strange and troubling vignette eliciting only a transient sympathy from an audience still largely unpoliticized by anti-slavery propaganda. Restored to its proper referential context, however, the account unfolds gradually and naturally from a developing discourse on the comparative racial value of each human factor (Blacks, Indians, Englishmen) in the Barbados colonial equation. As an intimate of the slavocracy, Ligon expresses no particularly strong ideological animus against the moral basis of plantation slavery. Instead, he takes advantage of his peculiar privileged status to observe and record his impressions of New World plantation economy. As a primary source for the early history of Barbados, his text provides us with a valuable resource for appreciating the nature of that colonial society's social, economic and political arrangements.

Ligon's substantive object seems to be the production of a factual, reliable history that would authentically represent the exotic human factors in this equation (Africans, Indians) without fundamentally altering their contemporary

images and values. The explicit order Ligon adopts in delineating the island's diverse racial groups corresponds to an implicit assumption about their relative moral and human value in the colonial universe. Starting with African slaves, proceeding through Indians and culminating with white masters, his discussion stresses differences in physical appearances, intellectual capabilities, nutrition, work and personal habits. The general tenor and tendency are always to conceptualize Africans and Indians in terms of their aptitude for and adaptability to the purposes of white survival and profit, his comparisons almost always slanted to the advantage of the whites.

The narrative presents a curiously alternating pattern of statements prejudicial to African character:

They are a people of timorous and fearful disposition, and consequently bloody when they find advantages. If any of them commit a fault, give him present punishment; but do not threaten him; for if you do, it is an even lay, he will go and hang himself to avoid punishment. (Ligon 1673: 50).

and statements like the following that moderate and balance the harsher vision of demoralized subhuman masses:

Let others have what opinion they please, yet I am of this opinion that there are to be found amongst them, some who are as morally honest, as conscionable, as humble, as loving to their friends, and as loyal to their Masters, as any that live under the Sun; and one reason they have to be so, is, they set no great value upon their lives. (Ligon 1673: 54).

Next in precedence, the Indians are described not so much on their own merits but, significantly, in comparison to Blacks: "They are very active men, and apt to learn anything sooner than Negroes; ... their women have very small breasts, and have more of the shape of the Europeans than the Negroes ..." (Ligon 1673: 54). The Inkle and Yarico story follows these comments and is succeeded by an extended description of the master class.

Ligon's *True and Exact History* exhibits a dialogical narrative strategy that mixes the older traditional modes of moralized history with an emergent new realistic historiography whose object Rachel Trickett (1967: 186) describes as "authenticated truth". As indicators of developments in historical writing, these mixed modes reflect expanding options and transitional values which implicate the narration of events and the construction of meaning from the narrative. Typically, Ligon shifts into the mode of moralized history when he feels he can safely indulge the public appetite for *noble savage* mythology, without threatening the security of slavocratic values. In a section describing the distinctive traits of Indians in general, he constructs Yarico as a female image of primitive heroic virtue who bravely chooses to suffer the throes of childbirth

in solitude and without assistance of any kind, returning triumphantly after three hours, delivered of a "Lusty Boy, frolick and lively", properly washed and wrapped in swathing clothes. In recounting this part of her personal history, Ligon does not identify her as the victim of Yarico's calloused greed. Instead, he portrays her as a noble savage figure within an idealized narrative context that enjoys comparatively greater spatial privilege than the tragic and celebrated plot itself.

By contrast, the central Inkle and Yarico narrative occupies just a single paragraph at the end of the preceding relation. From the moralized reflections that invested the factual events of Indian childbirth with mythic values, Ligon switches to a narrative mode that is unornamented, lucid and precise. After the highly sentimentalized colouring of the preceding account, the tale of Yarico's betrayal is produced with conscious ironic restraint and dispassion.

These two markedly differentiated narrative strategies display Ligon as a historical writer at once challenging and mediating his own discourse. And this ambivalent relationship to his text seems to arise as much from the specific procedures by which his history was created (i.e. his on-the-spot eyewitness participant observation) as from the issues arising from the identity/difference dichotomy that defined his relationship to his subject. Ligon's bivocal strategies dissolve the fiction of detached objectivity that holds Other in a space exterior to and remote from Self. On the one hand, the rhetoric of myth ennobles Yarico, minimizing the values attached to gender difference. On the other, a rhetoric of parsimonious judgment rehumanizes her, transforming racial difference into shared identity with the historian. Ligon expresses a muted sympathy for Yarico in this terse philosophical summation: "And so poor Yarico for her love lost her liberty" (Ligon 1673: 55). Taken together with those instances cited earlier where he mediates and challenges his own judgments concerning Indians and Blacks, this statement reveals a progressive dissolution of the boundaries between Self and Other. Such instances are effective proofs of Rimbaud's philosophical theorem "Je est un autre"; they represent Ligon's discovery of Self in Other. They also aptly illustrate Todorov's modern revisioning of the process and meaning of discovery and conquest. As Todorov (1984: 3) writes: "We can discover the other in ourselves, realize we are not a homogeneous substance, radically alien to whatever is not us ... Others are subjects just as I am, whom only my point of view ... separates and authentically distinguishes from myself."

The comparatively greater freedom and flexibility afforded by imaginative literary form permits the *Spectator* to exploit more fully those possibilities that Ligon could raise but which historiographical rules constrained him from exploring at greater depth. Steele shifts Ligon's focus and produces the story in

the context of a battle-of-the-sexes debate on female fidelity, appropriating the inherent potential of the Inkle and Yarico narrative to dramatize complex issues of race and gender. The design of the *Spectator* version is an equally complex narrative structure constituted of three narrative personae: the presiding consciousness of the *Spectator* himself, a male, identified only by the generic denomination of a "Common-Place Talker", and a female named Arietta.

The Common-Place Talker sets out to prove the historical infidelity of the female sex by resorting to potted history. The *Spectator* describes him as having "repeated and murdered the celebrated story of the Ephesian Matron" to justify his fatuous disparagements on female character in general. By deploying key ironic constructions around the Common-Place Talker's discourse, Steele undercuts the Talker's credibility and calls his judgment and motives into question by ridiculing his style and the rhetorical ornaments he flaunts to embellish his performance. The *Spectator* contemptuously describes his subject as the "Old Topick" of constancy in love, discredits his sources as "arguments and quotations out of plays and songs which allude to the perjuries of the Fair", and exposes his motivation as an effort "to shine more than ordinary in a Talkative way", in order to humiliate the *Spectator* and win the favour of Arietta, his other audience, shortly to become his disputant. Placing his own specious constructions on Petronius' narrative, the Common-Place Talker strives to serve deliberately narrowed, sexually biased ends, thus constructing the very kind of historiography Ligon's text was repudiating, and which Voltaire and the whole school of Enlightenment historiography were striving to supplant. The Common-Place Talker's is history designed to promote a narrow individualist (partisan) interest, Whiggish, one might say, strikingly antithetical to the Royal Society's method: "he strove to shine more than ordinarily".

Responding to her male disputant's calumnies on female virtue and constancy, Arietta counterpoints the Inkle and Yarico story not only to refute unfair (because narrowly based and sexually biased) generalizations about female character, but also to expose here male interlocutor's doctrinaire postulations as the effects of women's unequal access to literary and historical institutions, and to propose instead a revisionist historiography that would affect the forms and methods of female portrayal in literature and history. Although she clearly assumes Yarico's voice and adopts a distinctly feminist point of view, she also signals, from the outset of the narration, her intent to proceed after a wholly different philosophical method from that of the Common-Place Talker and kindred 'historians': "Let us take Facts from plain People, and from such as have not either Ambition or Capacity to embellish their Narrations with any Beauties of Imagination" (*Spectator*: 49).

Arietta's ironic preface suggests the low estimate she places on the Talker's original, expropriated blindly and without any attempt at imaginative revalu-

ation. "When I consider how perfectly new all you have said on this subject is, and that the Story you have given us is not quite Two thousand Years old, I cannot but think it a Piece of Presumption to dispute with you". (*Spectator*: 48). Her principal and principled objections are to history that draws conclusions from broad generalizations and arbitrary examples. She challenges the credibility and reliability of Petronius, suggesting that his aspersions on female character proceed from misogynistic motives, associating him with those "Authors who leave behind them Memorials against the Scorn of particular Women, in invectives against the whole sex" (*Spectator*: 49). Her allusion to the fable of the lion and the man clearly signifies her appreciation of the disadvantages suffered by those subjects, Others, (women and lions) whose ontological value is constantly being misrepresented, distorted or ignored because they suffer from limited or no access to the writing of history; and she means to explode the pretensions of a historiography produced from precisely those conditions of exclusion.

Arietta takes particular pains to identify and establish the authority of her source, characterizing Ligon as an "honest Traveller", and citing the specific page ("the fifty-fifth") of the referenced text. The ensuing narration is about eight times the length of Ligon's original; its greater textual volume does not challenge any of the substantive facts of Ligon's version – indeed it proceeds with the same attention to specificity of detail and particularized plot development. But where Ligon appears conflicted by the twin tensions of primitivistic mythology and exact, authenticated historiography, Steele repudiates the moralized subjective methodology and emphasizes the exact disinterested values of the new historiography. Still, by Arietta's own admission, her version is aimed at inventing a plausible voice for Yarico by appointing herself Yarico's historian and legitimizing Yarico's selfless devotion towards Inkle by giving those relevant actions higher profile in the narrative. The effect is to redress the gender imbalance among history writers and to expunge from the history of female consciousness those negative calumnies perpetuated by Petronius and the Common-Place Talker: "You men are Writers, and can represent us Women as Unbecoming as you please in your Works, while we are unable to return the Injury" (*Spectator*: 49).

Steele's version portrays Inkle as an unrepentant capitalist, singlemindedly bent on turning every opportunity to his personal profit and advantage. Its import is to affirm that treachery, infidelity and disloyalty are not gender- or race-specific. In resisting the Common Place Talker's rhetorical style, in ridiculing his unexamined use of potted history to defame Other and elevate Self, Arietta rejects that kind of history as unreliable and incomplete. The *Spectator*'s coda at the end of Arietta's narrative is characteristically understated: "I was so touched with this story (which I think should be always a Counterpart to the *Ephesian Matron*) that I left the Room with tears in my

Eyes ...” (*Spectator*: 51). Yet, it emphatically suggests the need for continuous historical revisions by means of dialogic interventions like Arietta’s, and for the exercise of vigilance to purify and perfect the human record.

George Colman’s theatrical dramatization of this history continues the process of narrative structuration by adapting Ligon’s basic plot and Steele’s substantive amplifications to the formal requirements of sentimental comedy (Colman 1983). The result of all these diverse levels of transformation is a text that displays the original history’s capacity to accommodate itself continuously to the invention of new histories, both public and private.

For Colman, the play’s immense popular success translated into rich monetary reward, securing him financially and assuring his place in theatrical history. Mrs Inchbald (1908, XX: 5) records that this operatic drama was performed in “every theatre of London and in every theatre of the kingdom with the same degree of splendid success”. In reinventing Inkle for his dramatized history, Colman posits that Inkle’s pursuit of personal history in the New World was but an extension of notions, formed during his London youth, about the invention of Self at the expense of Other. Then, he viewed women largely as predatory animals who devoured men’s fortunes, or, in those rare cases where they possessed wealth, as prey a man might snare to enhance his personal history. “In London [I] laughed at the youngers of the town, and when I saw their chariots with some fine, tempting girl, parked on the corner, would cry ‘Ah, there sits ruin, there flies the green horn’s money!’, then wondered with myself how men could trifle time on women or, indeed, think of any women without fortunes?” (Colman 1983: 101).

It is perfectly reasonable, then, that Inkle should define the New World and its contents – from his central utilitarian ethic – as Others, readily available for his commodification. His first thoughts on seeing the American Indians are about the price they would fetch in West Indian slave markets. The circumstances that occasioned his separation from the rest of the foraging crew and brought him to Yarico’s attention were partly his own obsessive calculations on the profit he might make from this new land. Chided by his uncle Medium for risking his safety and endangering the lives of his companions, Inkle retorts: “Do you think I travel merely for motion? Travelling, uncle, was always intended for improvement, and improvement is an advantage, and advantage is profit, and profit is gain” (Colman 1983: 69).

Colman combines these signifiers of Inkle’s private ideology to invent a metaphor for the broader moral history of growing capitalist and slavocratic economies, and for other kinds of history that will attend and emerge from Inkle’s further adventures in the New World. The interaction of such private and

public ideologies create and sustain the alterities of race, gender and authorial difference illustrated in the subsequent emplotment of events.

In the light of Inkle's thoroughgoing materialistic ethics, his attitudes and actions towards Yarico in America and in Barbados unmask his protestations of love as calculated deceit. While she is showering him with unselfish attentions and pouring out her ideal love and devotion, he is constructing her as an object *alterior* to his identity, and therefore susceptible to commodification at the first available opportunity. Similarly, his valet Trudge, who falls in love with Yarico's female companion Wowski, exploits his cosmopolitan experiences to inflate himself in Wowski's eyes and win her trust and protection. Both Inkle and Trudge oblige Yarico and Wowski to communicate with them in English. Predictably the advantages of language in this context of difference are all on the Englishmen's side – and they exploit them shamelessly. Inkle overwhelms Yarico with extravagant promises of silks and horsedrawn carriages. Trudge, in his pursuit of self-invention in the eyes of Wowski, emphasized the differences between Indians and English by claiming all the advantages of beauty, wealth and civilization for all of his kind, those identified with Self, over the perceived unenlightened primitivism of Wowski's, all those different from himself, Others: "All the fine men are like me: as different from your people as powder and ink, or paper and blacking" (Colman 1983: 85).

It is clear, then, that Yarico, Wowski and all her tribe were consigned to alterity long before they reached Barbados. So that, on their arrival in that colony, it is not surprising that a planter makes Trudge an instant offer for Wowski: "Is that young Indian of yours going to our market? ... Is she for our sale of slaves? ... At how much do you value her?" By this time Wowski's innocent good-nature and her utter dependency on him have won Trudge's loyalty and devotion. The abuse heaped on him by the planters whose offers he rebuffs sets his face firmly against their moral system. He commences to subvert their values and to rethink his own. The underside of this facetious jest aimed at a planter reveals his newly illuminated consciousness that Self may exist within Other: "If your head and heart were to change places, I've a notion you'd be as black in the face as an ink bottle" (Colman 1983: 87).

With his master Inkle, things go otherwise, at least for a while. When his relationship to Yarico threatens to ruin his chances of marrying Narcissa the Governor's daughter, and of improving his opportunities for principal and profit, he promptly offers Yarico for sale to the Governor himself (neither man is aware of the other's identity at this moment). The scenes to follow place Inkle's constancy to Yarico and his constancy to profit and principal in pronounced tension. But Colman redeems the legacy of tragic history inherited from Ligon and Steele by making the Governor the instrument of a dialogic intervention which effects the reversal of moral chaos. Uncharacteristically, the Governor

summons his political will power to force Inkle to abandon his pursuit of profit and marry Yarico. In so doing, he also forces Inkle to renounce the precepts of self-interest instilled by his father, "Oh, curse such principles, principles which destroy all confidence between man and man, principles which none but a rogue could instil and none but a rogue could imbibe" (Colman 1983: 109). Inkle's private history suffers a momentous alteration. On the personal level, the Governor discovers an instinctive sympathy for Yarico that moves him to oppose Inkle's cynical materialism with his own blundering and selective sentimentalism. Prior to this decisive exercise of political and moral authority, the Governor had distinguished himself as little more than a befuddled parody of slavocratic leadership. It is ironic, then, but strategic to the purposes of Colman's sentimental comedy, that this figure should become the voice of self-love, that fashionable eighteenth-century ethical idea by which the Other is identified with the Self. The governor's criteria for human value, though stated in the exclusive terms of racial bias, are persuasive enough to melt Inkle's heart and preserve Yarico's human integrity. Addressing Yarico, he discloses the terms of his championship: "As you say, she is a delicate girl, above the common run, and none of your thick lipped, fat nosed, squabby, dumpling dowdies" (Colman 1983: 103). Though this action merely alters the single case of Yarico and leaves intact the wider historical context of Barbadian slavery, Colman appears to imply that the transformation of political history must necessarily begin with transformations in private histories. Colman's bold experimentation with mixed modes (comic and sentimental) may have alienated the critical establishment but it took to new heights the role of the theatre in legitimizing the history of "other" voices and "other" sensibilities.

From Ligon's history to Colman's comic opera, all these versions of the Inkle and Yarico narrative demonstrate artfully nuanced representational strategies and altered terms of emplotment and characterization. As each text proclaims its self-conscious dissociation from the limited methodologies of traditional history, it chooses thereby to indulge the pleasure of its own textual difference. That self-indulgence enacts a characteristic procedure of Enlightenment intellectual inquiry. It disentangles the arts of writing both history and literature from the encumbrances of cultural and ideological preconceptions, freeing each author to study and shun what Francis Bacon (1937: 172) called the "distempers of learning" which breed false methods and flawed science. The construction of alterity in these texts therefore becomes a complex metaphor for three acts of invention. Insofar as each text documents its author's capacity to construct himself, it represents its author as a reinventor of language's power not so much to reveal truths but to create meaning. In this way, the text signifies the alterity of its creative consciousness. Insofar as each text illustrates the Todorovian

affirmation that the discovery of the other unfolds by gradual degrees, it may be understood to legitimize the rather more problematic but not unrelated alterities of race and gender.

NOTES

1. This article is the revised version of a paper originally read at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies held at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana, October 7-9, 1988.
2. Ligon repeats the story with virtual exactitude in the 1672 edition of his *True and Exact History of Barbadoes*. All quotations from Ligon refer to that edition.
3. Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, *The Spectator* (edited by Donald F. Bond, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1965, 5 vols) I. All quotations from the essay, *Spectator* No. 11, will be cited within this article's text as *Spectator*, followed by a page number.
4. Thomas Bellamy, *The London Theatres* (London, 1795); quoted in *Plays by George Colman the Younger and Thomas Morton*, ed. Barry Sutcliffe (London, Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 53, n. 59. All textual references to Colman's *Inkle and Yarico* are drawn from the Sutcliffe edition.

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RASTAFARI: TOWARDS A NEW APPROACH¹

The Rastafari movement has been described variously as escapist, nativistic, millenarian, visionary, revitalistic – all terms which reflect the impulse in our discipline towards scientific generalisation. However, in only a very few cases of the many works written on the Rastas in Jamaica is the use of the particular terminology based on original field research, as opposed to secondary sources, and on the considered attempt therefrom to classify.

One notable example is that of Klaus De Albuquerque (1977), who makes the strongest case that I am aware of that the Rastafari is a millenarian movement. His approach is to construct a theoretical model of millenarian movements and to test it using the Rastafari movement. To establish the relationship between any millenarian movement and the wider society, he says, one has to examine the “prerequisites” and the “conditions” which give rise to it. In practical terms this requires an understanding of four distinct factors. The first is the form: whether the millenarian movement is a religious or a secular one. According to De Albuquerque, what determines the form is the level of development of the society. In industrialised societies the political structure is sharply differentiated from the religious; in pre-industrial and “modernizing” societies this is not so. As a result, millenarian movements occur mainly in the latter and are generally religious. They are not unknown in the former, but there, he says, that depends on the *locus* of the origin of oppression.

Thus, a second factor is the type of society. Industrialised societies are characterised by political structures which have developed the “capacity to absorb and deflect protest”, or to mobilize and so defuse revolutionary threats. Pre-industrial societies are lacking in this capacity.

A third factor is the religious belief system of the society, whether it is given to strong or weak eschatological expectations. If these are weak, the millenarian movement will likely take a secular, non-revolutionary and passive form; but if strong, the movement is more likely to be religious, revolutionary and active.

Finally, there is the aetiological origin itself. Here, De Albuquerque argues, the factors may be exogenous or endogenous. In an industrialised society endogenous factors condition the movement to be passive and escapist, appealing to bourgeois elements, whereas in pre-industrialised societies exogenous factors of origin lead to revolutionary millenarian movements, with appeals to the "external proletariat", external, that is, in the sense of being marginal to the system. Endogenous factors may also have the same effect, if the political structures are at the same time well-developed, even if the society as a whole is not.

With a model constructed of these elements, De Albuquerque situates Jamaican society within the ranks of the pre-industrialised, or modernizing, societies, but one which also has a well-developed political structure. After examining the Rastafari, he concludes:

Given the existence of oppression ... and the above specifying conditions, we would expect the Rastafari movement to assume a revolutionary character and appeal to the external proletariat (landless peasants and urban unemployed).

The case study of the movement bears this out, with the exception, that the movement had initially, and continues to have, very little impact on the Jamaican peasantry, landless or otherwise. (De Albuquerque 1977: 358-59).

Apart from the fact that the theory tends to rule out the possibility of revolutionary millenarian movements in industrialised societies, the main difficulty it presents is not even so much the one acknowledged by the author in the above passage, namely that after nearly fifty years of existence the movement still lacked appeal to the external proletariat (for it is possible to bring forward evidence to show that it is precisely this sector to which the movement has appealed), but the definition of the Rastafari as a revolutionary movement.

De Albuquerque, unfortunately, does not define his use of the word "revolutionary", so one is not absolutely sure of what he means. In the context of the discussion that would make no sense, since any movement that is radically different from the mainstream could qualify as revolutionary. However, it seems to me, given the context of the discussion, in which he defines politics as participation in some goal seeking, and in which he accords a high place in the paradigm to an activity-passivity dichotomy, that he is using the concept revolutionary in much the same way Hobsbawm used it in relation to the "primitive rebels" of Sicily: people who, in reaction to existing social and other conditions, actively take measures in pursuit of a radical transformation. If this

is so, one would have to concede that the Rastafari movement is revolutionary, not just because it consistently preaches a doctrine about a new order, in which every Black man will have his own "vine and fig tree", thus reversing the order of Black people at the bottom of society, but because it has occasionally (1934, 1956 and 1959 most notably) taken measures to bring about repatriation to Africa. If one reads De Albuquerque correctly, one cannot be revolutionary and passive at the same time.

But is the Rastafari a revolutionary movement? Is that what it is all about? In what follows I wish to advance a different way of looking at the religion, one which departs from a purely social structure type of perspective and tries to see it rather in the context of cultural continuity. Specifically, I raise two issues without trying at this time to resolve them. One examines the relationship of Rastafari to Revivalism and the other looks at the structure of the movement itself.

THE REVIVAL PAST

In 1860 a great revival took place among the Christian Churches in Jamaica. Church leaders viewed it as a sign of great outpouring by the Holy Spirit of God, as thousands of the former slaves and their descendants swelled the congregations to overflowing. Quite unexpectedly, the revival turned sour as people began expressing their religious fervour not in the "Christian" ways planned by the Churches but in pagan ways, thus marking a resurgence of Myalism, an Afro-Jamaican religion. Spirit possession, groaning, convulsions, manifestations of Myalism, subverted the great revival, as Church leaders denounced them as the work of the devil. To add insult to injury, the people appropriated the name Revival, distinguishing between Revival Zion, from Pukumina, its less christianised and more distinctively African variant.

Thus Revival Zion grew out of Myal. According to Schuler (1975), Myal first appeared in the middle of the eighteenth century and provided the basis on which slaves could build pan-African resistance to enslavement, whereas up to then revolts had been largely tribal. One of the features of African religion, according to Alleyne (1988: 59), is its receptivity to external influences. As an African-derived religion, therefore, Myal was easily able to adopt Christianity, as well as to be adopted by Christianity, as soon as the Black Baptists, George Lisle and Moses Baker and others began preaching to the slaves late in the century. Sometimes this religion appeared under the name Myal, but it was content to thrive under the name Native Baptist. Robotham (1988: 35) calls it a critical development, because it constructed "the synthesis for consciousness

in which traditional ethnicities were dissolved" and "established a new ethical code for the people not only in the religious but in the *cultural* sense".

Revival Zion is indeed a religion. But underlying its expression is a coherent world view, which I refer to as Revivalism, or simply Revival. Briefly summarised, this religion has three central features, which I shall briefly discuss.

1. God, Spirits and the Dead

The Jamaicans, like their African forebears, believe in a Supreme Being, a Creator, called God, or Maasa Gad, or the Father. Though He knows and sees all, God is, nevertheless, distant from the affairs of mankind. The acts of the elements are His, such as earthquake, lightening, thunder, storm and floods, and swearing by God or by the elements, particularly lightening, is regarded as a grave and solemn act, for which reason it is seldom done.

As God is distant, so are the Spirits near. In, around, and even within. In recognition of this, rum drinkers even today will pour a libation before drinking, and children used to be taught when eating always to leave a small portion by the edge of their plates. Of all spirits Jesus is the greatest. His role of dying to save all mankind has imbued him with special powers. Jesus is the object of supplication and prayer, and is often called, Father Jesus or Pupa Jesus. The most central shrine or seal in the tabernacle is devoted to him, but he never possesses anyone as Jesus. His Spirit, though, or the Dove or Messenger, may possess devotees.

Lesser spirits include Angels and Archangels such as Michael, Gabriel and Raphael; prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and John the Baptist; and apostles. The spirit world also includes the very powerful Fallen Angels, Satan being the highest among them. They too can be supplicated, especially for material favours, but they are dangerous.

Spirits of the dead, duppies, complete the Jamaican pantheon. The elaborate death rituals are characterised by great mourning and display of grief among near relatives; a compulsive need to show respect for the deceased and solidarity with the bereaved; and by elaborate precautions to prevent the duppy from returning across the threshold separating the worlds of the living and the dead. Duppies are thought to roam abroad at nights, frightening and terrorising the living. They may also be used by obeahmen to harm people. The most feared are East Indian, Chinese and baby duppies. To relatives, however, duppies may assume protective roles, communicating with them in sleep. Such communications from the spirit world are called visions, to distinguish them from ordinary dreams.

A function of the spirits is the possession of man. Spirits are not feared on account of this, and spirit possession is considered not only a normal part of

religious worship but an honour. It is the way some people are chosen for a higher life.

2. *Man, Nature and Magic*

Nature represents a zone which interfaces the material and spirit worlds, thus establishing a continuum of universal existence. Nature is material, but it is also spiritual. The same croton which makes a beautiful hedge also symbolises the Prophet Jeremiah, and adorns graves because it is thought to keep duppies within the graves. Herbs, such as mint and sage, trees, such as the majestic cottonwood, rivers and certain species of animals, like frogs and large moths, similarly have both sacred and profane identities. One never kills large moths, or bats as they are called; they are believed to represent the ancestors.

But if nature is a threshold across which the spirit world crosses into the world of the living, it is also a zone whereby man can acquire the power of the spirits and control both worlds. Here, even inanimate things may be used by man: a pinch of salt and a swig of rum, for example, are all the guarantees gravediggers need. And a saucer of salt may always be found on the sacred table during mourning rituals. Red fabric, pencils and scissors are used to ward off evil spirits.

With the right knowledge, therefore, one can control even the spirit world. The obeahman is invested with this knowledge, which he uses mainly for harm, but anyone may use to his advantage: charms and amulets for protection; oils and powders to achieve certain goals.²

But perhaps the greatest asset of nature is its healing properties. A general belief is that there is no illness for which there is no remedy provided by nature. The healing process may take place at not one but several levels, from the straightforward application until relief comes to treatment which combines nature with magic and ritual. The religious healer practices in a "balm yard". A good practitioner is able not only to heal but to divine and read the future.

Hence, the general attitude toward nature is one of respect and harmony. Man himself is regarded as a sinful creature, but also a vital part of nature and subject to its laws. Like the children of Israel of old, enslavement and oppression are a consequence of sin, a condition which will be remedied only in the next world, following a life of righteousness in this. Black skin colour is a sign of debasement. Not only are expressions common which assume this (for example, our failure as an ethnic group to advance, compared to other ethnic immigrant groups), but there are also tales which tell, not without humour, how Blacks came to be black. They all tell of some aberration or weakness of character.³ When the great Revival preacher and healer, Alexander Bedward, told ethnographer Marthe Beckwith that in heaven his hand will become as lily white

as her own, he was expressing commonly held views about black skin colour, sin and oppression (Beckwith 1929: 169-70). Holding such views, however, did not prevent him from calling for the overthrow of white rule (Chevannes 1971).

Mankind as a whole is sinful, but in the Revival world view woman represents a particularly serious danger to man, even as she also represents a particularly delightful pleasure. The Adam and Eve myth tells the tale of what lies in store for man if woman is allowed to control him. Woman is therefore not to be trusted, even when she is loved. Eve and Delilah are prototypes of the female. Man is vulnerable during woman's menstrual flow, and to avoid all possibilities of contamination male and female underwear are strictly segregated. Indeed, only a woman herself may wash her own underwear. Pregnant and menstruating women are thought to have a malignant effect on certain crops.

At the same time, women are a source of delight and comfort. Feelings about sex are not as guilt-ridden as would appear from the attitudes preached by the Christian and the Evangelical churches, though the situation could be changing, given the dramatic growth of the latter. Women are believed to be always satisfied with sex. But it is in their role as mothers that women elicit the greatest respect from menfolk. A woman's pride in motherhood is strong. The bond between mother and son is the strongest of all domestic relationships, and the greatest insult possible to any man is to berate his mother. Motherhood is so highly valued that the title *Mada* is given to women who gain the wide respect of their communities, and those who become Revival leaders.

3. Ethical and Social Values

The world view fashioned by Myal in its interaction with Christianity holds to a sense of moral and cultural equality for all Blacks, as Robotham (1988) points out. It also has imbued the people with a strong sense of community. For instance, it values individualism and respects achieved status, but only if communal values are also upheld. People who achieve but by their actions and attitudes reject their community are sanctioned. "The higher monkey climb, the more him expose."

The world, God, spirits, nature, man are all governed by order and interdependence. It is really one world. Nowhere is this more deeply manifested than in the concept of "helping out", whereby voluntary and spontaneous acts of responsibility and sharing are undertaken, oftentimes on behalf of strangers, out of a sense of mutual interdependence and reciprocity. The good one does today will redound to one tomorrow; the good that is done one today is the result of the good one did yesterday. The concept is akin to the Christian teaching about storing up treasures in heaven, except that the reward is expected in this life rather than the next.

For this reason, the belief in retribution and fate is equally strong. The evil which one does will be repaid sooner or later. "What is fiyu kyaan be anfiyu" (one cannot escape one's fate).

This summary of the world view of the Jamaicans is neither exhaustive nor intended to imply that these beliefs are shared fully by everyone. I do argue, though, that they are generalised throughout the population, which is why the Revival religion could be found anywhere in the island without having had a centrally organised structure of the type possessed by most Churches. The closest it came to this was under the great prophet Bedward, and even then not all entered into formal affiliation with him, and those who did seemed in any case to have been allowed to retain their autonomy. This process of a generalised world view giving rise to non-centralised religious expression is replicated in identical fashion with the rise of the Rastafari.

RASTAFARI BELIEFS

The most important belief of the Rastafari is that Haile Selassie, the late Emperor of Ethiopia is God. This alone was enough for the general public to identify them by (from Ras, the Ethiopian title meaning Prince, and Tafari, the Emperor's name), although they originally called themselves the King of Kings people. But underlying the belief in the Emperor's divinity is the conclusion they reached that the Black man was destined to return to his native Africa, after centuries of ongoing injustice at the hands of the White man. Repatriation, as the return to Africa is known, thus became the first important departure from Revival, and remained up to the recent past a source of inspiration for the faithful as a whole and Rastafari artists in particular.

Babylon is a wicked one
Babylon is a wicked one
Babylon is a wicked one
O, Jah Rastafari O, Selah!

Our forefathers were taken away
Our forefathers were taken away
Our forefathers were taken away
O, Jah Rastafari O, Selah!

Open up da gate mek I repatriate
Open up da gate mek I repatriate
Open up da gate mek I repatriate
O, Jah Rastafari O, Selah!

The motif in this plaintive song, which may be heard at Rastafari celebrations, is one which is quite common among Blacks with a Christian tradition, namely their likeness to the ancient children of Israel who were rescued from their captivity by the intervention of God. Here, the image is used not as metaphor, but as reality itself. We are the true Israelites; what is written in the Bible being only a foreshadowing of real events now unfolding. The Babylon of old is none other than the white colonial and neo-colonial world.

These themes are not confined to ceremonies, but may be found in popular songs as well. *By the rivers of Babylon* is perhaps one of the best known Rastafari songs, made internationally popular by the European group, Boney M. In Jamaica one of the most popular songs of all times evokes images of the promised land:

There is a land, far, far away,
Where there's no night, there's only day.
Look into the Book of Life and you will see
That there's a land, far, far away.

The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords
Sits upon his throne and he rules us all.
Look into the Book of Life and you will see
That there's a land, far, far away.

Originally sung by the Abyssinians in the 1960s, it had by 1980 undergone over seventy different versions. The far away land was Ethiopia, where the King of Kings, Haile Selassie, ruled. Its title is *Sata amas agaana*, the Amharic for "Give thanks and praises". *Babylon Burning*, with musical motifs of the round *London burning*, sung by the Wailers, *I want to go back home*, by Alton Ellis, *Seven miles of Black Star Liners*, by Burning Spear and numerous others express the same theme of exile and repatriation.

By contrast, one is hard put to find a single Revival song which expresses the sentiment of return to Africa. There is the following:

I want to go home to that land,
I want to go home to that land,
I want to go home to that land where I am from;
For there is joy in my soul,
Peace and happiness in my mind –
I want to go home to that land where I am from.

The "land where I am from" could be interpreted as Africa, but the feelings of present joy, peace and happiness are not congruent with yearnings of return. Rather, the song expresses the readiness of the faithful, the saved, to go "home"

to heaven. This is particularly clear in another very popular Revival song, which was adopted with a change of words by the Rastafari.

Fly away home to Zion, fly away home:
One bright morning when my life is over,
I will fly away home.

The Rastafari change of the word "life" to "work" reflects the main difference between the two religions: salvation in the here and now of this life as against postponement into the next. "Zion" is no longer the heaven in the skies but Ethiopia, or Africa, where God is.

A second major tenet of the Rastafari, which also marks an important divergence from Revival, is the conclusion that God is Black. It derives from the racial characteristic of Haile Selassie himself, and gives to Blacks a sense of being one with, of sharing in an attribute of God. Black man is thereby elevated in status.

Two things follow. First is the rejection of the hegemonic system of values whereby "if you are white, that's right; if you are black, you stay back". The alienation between God and man need no longer exist, because there is a profound way in which God shares a part of his being with those who once were poor. Man, that is Black man, is also divine. Rastafari resist speaking of Black men becoming converted. One does not become converted, one begins to *manifest* Rastafari, thereby implying the evolution or unfolding of something already within.

Where does that leave whites? Rastafari, instead of going the way of the Black Nationalists of the United States with a mythology that makes whiteness an attribute of the Devil, allow the possibility of salvation for whites, based on inward acknowledgement of the evil of white society and rejecting it.

Second, the elevation of man to the status of shared identity with God is at the same time an elevation over the world of Spirits. Rastafari do not recognise the existence of, let alone communicate with, those beings which are so central to Revival. They have no need of them. If there are no spirits but only God and man, and if man is also part God, then God himself no longer is the distant Big Maasa, without a real role in the affairs of man, but a loving Father. When Rastafari speak of "the Father", they do so with great reverence and with an awareness of his central place in their lives. To some extent the identity with the Father gives coherence to the strong patriarchal orientation for which the movement is noted. This alteration of the spirit world marks a radical departure from the African tradition, so far as the retention of a particular form is concerned. But, as we shall see later, there is strong retention of belief in the immanence of God.

The above two tenets of Rastafari are the most fundamental, and they characterise the main divergence from Revival. They were made possible by a most important development in the history of Blacks, the rise of Marcus Garvey as a great visionary and teacher. Although his Back-to-Africa scheme failed,⁴ his Shipping Line and other economic enterprises floundered and his years of involvement in Jamaican politics came to nought, Garvey positively and permanently laid the foundation for a transformation in the thinking of Blacks through his tireless teachings on their past achievements and future possibilities and the respect he won by the magnitude and daring of his schemes. He identified race as the defining characteristic of a Black nationality, thereby giving a sense of brotherhood to millions in the new and old worlds, and a new sense of power and identity. The early Rastafari, leaders and followers, all considered themselves Garveyites. To them he was John the Baptist, leading them to the one who was to come greater than himself.

So great was Garvey's impact on popular consciousness, that the Bedwardites paired him with Bedward in the roles of Moses and Aaron, respectively. But other people also influenced by Garvey had other ideas: if Garvey was Moses (his middle name was Mosiah) the land of Jamaica must be Egypt and there must be a real promised land, not a metaphorical one.

Rastafari, then, started off as a radical departure from all that had gone before it. The image was helped as much by the two central doctrines as by the adoption of certain symbols, notably the beard and, by the 1950s, the use of ganja and the dreadlocks, and millenarian and non-millenarian activities to effect repatriation.

Despite the centrality of and insistence on this belief, Rastafari is not a Repatriation movement. For one, repatriation initiatives have not been many in over fifty years. In 1934 Howell was believed to have preached repatriation on August 1. In 1958 Prince Emmanuel Edwards called an all-Rasta convention and some Rastafari reportedly sold out their belongings and gathered in expectancy of the ships to take them "home". In 1959, Claudius Henry distributed blue cards to be used in lieu of passports for a "miraculous repatriation" on October 25. And in the following year his church was associated with attempts to force its way back to Africa.⁵ The closeness of the last three episodes was related to the heightening of migration to Britain at the time. Other activities range from the 1961 Mission to Africa, sponsored by the Government, participation in Back-to-Africa marches in the 1950s, and attempts by some leaders to press Government and the United Nations.

In addition, Repatriation does not mean the same to all. By Repatriation is meant not just the return of Africans to Africa, but also the restoration of Justice, by which Europeans would give up the lands they have seized from the

Amerindians and return to Europe. But naturally the focus is on "Africa for the Africans, at home and abroad!" Thus, some Rastafari even dissociate themselves from activities like the 1961 Mission, holding that while Governments can bring about migration, only Jah can bring about repatriation. Still others, such as the Twelve Tribes of Israel, adopt the position that since God helps those who help themselves there is nothing wrong in trying to get its members one by one to Ethiopia, where the Emperor left lands for settlement by Blacks in Sheshamane.

Finally, none of the above initiatives had the full support of Rastafarians, for the movement is a highly fragmented and unorganized one, a characteristic which works against united action. This point being of some relevance to the present discussion, I think some explanation is needed.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATION

Rastafari is an acephalous movement. There are groups, quasi-groups and individuals, who while sharing the core beliefs, nevertheless remain separate and independent. Consequently, the fortune of the movement as a whole is not tied to the fate of any particular leader or group, and it has been able not merely to survive the ups and downs of its relations with society over the years, but also to influence it.

Leonard Howell is generally thought to have been the very first to reach the conclusion that Haile Selassie was God. But Hibbert claimed to have done the same independently. Whether or not the initial Rastafarians influenced one another, the point is that from the very inception there were several men all preaching the same thing but *independently* of one another. There was one exception: Robert Hinds first began preaching with Howell but soon went his separate way. Thus Howell, Hinds, Hibbert, Dunkley, Napier, Powell and a few others were preaching Rastafari on the highways and byways of the city and countryside, and organising the converted into churches which they gave the name King of Kings, all at the same time, and without reference to any one as leader, even *primus inter pares*.

A second feature was thus its resistance to centralised organisation. Except among very specific sects, of which there are three – the influential Twelve Tribes of Israel, the Bobo led by Prince Emmanuel Edwards and the remnants of Claudius Henry's church, the Rastafarian refuses to surrender his freedom and autonomy by joining any organisation, Rastafari or not. A common explanation of the brethren is, "wat jain kyan brok!" (what is joined together can be broken). But in truth it is their ethical value of complete freedom from the force of man-made rules which informs this resistance. If one acts, it should be out of inner conviction, rather than out of the need for outward conformity. "Man free" is

another common expression, which means "Do as you feel justified to do". There have been repeated attempts in the past to forge a united body, to no avail. The Ethiopian International Unification Committee led by Attorney-at-Law Michael Lorne is only the most recent of a series which has included the Rasta Movement Association and the initiatives of others.

Third, this value of freedom from outward constraint finds expression for the majority of Rastafari in the quasi-organisation they refer to as the "House", that is the House of Nyabingi. The House is run by an "Assembly of Elders", theoretically numbering 72, but in reality far fewer. Homiak (1985: 490-91) summarises Eldership as combining cunning and resourcefulness with initiative and trust, but avoiding selfishness, arbitrariness or conceit. One does not become an Elder by appointment or election. The Elders oversee the affairs of the House, such as planning liturgical events, settling disputes, or appointing delegations as the need arises. But beyond the Assembly of Elders, there is no membership, as such. All are free to come or stay away, to participate or remain silent, to contribute or withhold financial dues. Yet one retains one's qualification as a member of the House simply by being a Rastafari. The openness of this sort of structure permits a great measure of democracy, in which all are equal, regardless of age, ability or function. But at the same time it makes a united, organised structure difficult if not impossible.

These characteristics of the Rastafari have a remarkable similarity to Revival, whose origin is traced to the incorporation by Myal of Christianity. The first Baptist to convert slaves was himself a Black slave who was brought to Jamaica by his Loyalist master fleeing the American Revolution. But the more slaves George Lisle converted, the less control he had, as converts went on their own, preaching their own understanding of Christianity, which in effect was Myal. Gibb, Lewis, Baker were three of those identified. They had no central organisation, no mutual cooperation. Their movement reproduced itself in a cellular way.

Yet, it was clear by what the missionaries referred to as "myal outbreaks", beginning not long after the turn of the century and appearing as late as 1860, that there was a fairly uniform system of beliefs distributed over the wide geographic regions of the island. This allowed for Revivalists to distinguish between two broad trends (or "houses" in fact), the "sixty" and the "sixty-one". The former worship only the sky-bound spirits, Jesus, the prophets, etc., the latter worship these as well as the earth-bound spirit, such as Satan and the fallen angels. Anywhere they go across the island, Revivalists are able to identify "sixty" from "sixty-one" and to associate with the one or the other.

No attempt was ever made to organise Revival into a united body, though at the height of Alexander Bedward's fame, scores of groups throughout the island were affiliated to him.

I do not intend to stretch the comparison to say that Revivalism also like Rasta was impervious to organisation, but the similarities are indeed striking in their spontaneous and acephalous nature.

There are similarities of a different kind, which in the context of the discussion deserve mention. I refer to the many examples where it is evident that certain crucial aspects of the Revival world outlook are very much alive in Rastafari. I distinguish two kinds: first, direct traces, where the forms are the same; and second, indirect traces, where Revival traditions provide the basis for what appear to be new Rastafari traditions.

Direct Traces are far more numerous than generally recognised, and may be summarised as follows:

1. *Ritual structure.* Revival meetings are basically divided into two parts: an initial period of drumming, singing, dancing and spirit possession, followed by the specific rituals which define what the meeting is about. Thus, the healing ritual, testimony service, and table all begin more or less the same way. The Rastafari meetings retain this element: an initial period of considerable duration in which the drumming-singing-dancing triad reigns, but without spirit possession. At the time of my fieldwork in 1975 this initial period gave way, just as in Revival, to a different element, namely Bible reading and preaching. At one ceremony I attended in Westmoreland, the Table from which the Elder spoke hosted a glass of water – another Revival trace.⁶

2. *Ritual instruments.* It is very interesting that in Professor Simpson's description of the anniversary celebration by one group of Haile Selassie's Coronation in 1953 the musical instruments included rhumba boxes, saxophones, guitars, violin, banjo, tambourines and rattles (Simpson 1955: 143). All this changed within ten years, as uniformly throughout the movement a bank of drums had replaced all other instruments and with a rhythm, called *nyabingi*, peculiar only to the Rastafari. The drums are of three types: a huge bass, larger than Revival's but struck the same way with the padded end of a stick; the funde, which establishes the rhythm; and the repeater, which pronounces the variations. The latter two are played with the hands and fingers. These drums are central to all Rastafari gatherings. Bilby and Leib (1986: 23) trace the origins of this music to a complex interpenetration of Buru, Kumina and Revival styles of drumming in West Kingston, and thus establish the accuracy of "Rastafari insistence on the 'African roots' of Nyabingi" (1986: 27). Most of the ceremonial songs of the Rastafari with adjustments in certain key words, as observed above, are legacies of Revival.

3. *Magic*. To "dance nyabingi" against an identified oppressor was, Rastafari believed, to invoke in a sure and compelling way the power of God to destroy him. According to one informant, fire was made to consume an effigy of the person. Although the practice may have ceased, I have heard Rastafari threaten to dance nyabingi for public personalities they considered oppressive to Rastafari. The dreadlocks are also believed to have magical properties, not to be used to harm the owner, however, but to be able to wreak destruction on Babylon. Such beliefs in magic are not surprising, since, according to Robert Hill (1983: 38) "popular belief in the power of the occult played a formative role in the early stages of Rastafari consciousness".

4. *Divination*. Rastafari believe in the power of the Bible to expose evil. In one incident concerning the loss of money belonging to the House, the Holy book was used to establish the guilty from the innocent.

5. *Herbal Lore*. Rastafari place heavy stress on nature as a gift of the Father "for the healing of the nation". This attitude applies not only to ganja but to all of nature, whether herbal or plant. Thus, with almost the force of doctrine, they reject artificial things pertaining to life, preferring the natural: herbal medicinal cures, herbal teas, natural spices and flavouring such as pepper and coconut milk.⁷

6. *Visions*. Rastafari share the same world view with other Jamaicans, which distinguish dreams from visions. Dreams are the images and fantasies which appear in sleep. Visions are dreams of particular significance, usually rich in symbolic meaning, and regarded as encoded messages from the world of the spirits. Although not believing in spirits other than the Father, the Rastafari nevertheless believe in his communication through visions.

Indirect Traces may be found in many new traditions which seem unique to the Rastafari but which may in fact be shown to owe much to the earlier world outlook. I now present some of the more obvious.

1. *Word Power*. The creation of a new mode of speech by the Rastafari has been noted by linguists (Pollard 1985; Alleyne 1988). Underlying it is a belief in the magical power of the word. Alleyne, while being too uncertain "about the earlier stages of language development in Jamaica to be able to reconstruct a continuous process through the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries", is of no doubt that Rastafari ideas about language are "an expression of African culture" (Alleyne 1988: 150). What he obviously implies is that more research is needed to establish the link, more research in fact on the world view I have been calling Revival.

To begin with, ethnographers have noted the predilection of the Jamaican peasant for the spoken word (Beckwith 1929), a tendency not adequately explained by the absence of a tradition of literacy, since even literate people

have the feeling that to address one in person is more effective than in writing. And a predilection not just for the spoken word, one might add, but for "big words", as if their use transformed the speaker's ability to be more effective. These traditions persist. Contemporary Jamaican culture, observes Brathwaite (1986), is essentially oral:

Names were viewed somewhat like extensions of one's person, and therefore the possible object of imitative magic. Hence, at night, one never answered to one's name being called, unless it was uttered three times, the number three thought to be outside the range of duppies. Similarly, one should not call out another's name in public. One attracts the other's attention either by a clapping of hands or the hissing of teeth. This custom considered it bad etiquette to do otherwise, but it was also believed that it exposed one to possible evil being conspired by strangers. The tradition still persists of giving children, especially girls, "pet names", that is names by which they were known by family and community, and official or "real names", sometimes known not even to the owner until read in adulthood on a birth certificate.

Nowhere is the power of the word more manifest today in non-Rastafari contexts than among the Pentecostal sects, where spirit possession takes place through the power of the preacher's words. But even in other conventional denominations the measure of satisfaction with the worship is directly a function not of the singing or the ritual but of the sermon. If good, it is described as "sweet".

These examples indicate that Rastafari predilection for the spoken word did not surface from nowhere. I see no difference between the Dreadlock's preference for "performing" than for writing his complaint or petition and the peasant's. His attribution of power to the word, so beautifully expressed in his phrasing, "Word, Sounds and Power!", is but a refinement of a tradition.

2. *Contamination of Death.* I noted the elaborate rituals traditionally taken in the wake of death, noting the fear of contamination of the world of the living by the spirits of the dead which inspires them. Rastafari carries this fear of contamination to its extreme. The brethren do not believe the true Rasta, as against the posers, will die. I am not now in a position to say whether this belief was institutionalised from the 1930s, though it is not unlikely. None of my "ancient" Rastafari ever made mention of death or burial. At any rate, up to the very recent past the belief that Rastafari cannot die was very strong. A change became noticeable in the 1980s, following first the report of the death of His Imperial Majesty in 1974 and that of Bob Marley in 1981. Today, some brethren admit that man is put on earth only for a time, not to live forever. This, however, is not the majority view.

As a result of not believing he will die, the Rastafari will have nothing to do with death: he attends no funerals, takes no part in their arrangement, no matter

how close the deceased, does not mourn or even discuss the event. Thus, in an ironic way, his ideological distancing has the same source as the ritualised distancing of the traditional believer: belief in the contaminating power of death.

3. *Woman as a source of evil.* Much is made of the Rastafari male supremacy over women (Nettleford 1970; Kitzinger 1971; Rowe 1980; Yawney 1983), buttressed by beliefs in her natural inferiority and power to contaminate. Rastafari believe that a woman is of such wayward nature that only through her male spouse, her "king-man" may she attain the enlightenment of Jah. Relationships are therefore marked by female submissiveness and obedience to the male, and ritual avoidance and even confinement during the menstrual flow. While this strong patriarchal tradition is indeed a direct contrast to traditional household patterns in Jamaica, its ideological root within the traditional world view is often missed.

4. *Man as God.* I have already drawn attention to the rejection of the spirit world by the Rastafari and its replacement with a belief in the nearness of God and oneness of being between Him and man. Yet it may be argued that the new doctrine is but an elevation of the most essential feature of the Revival beliefs about the relationship between the human and spiritual world, namely the fusion of identity which is possible in the form of ritual possession. Just as in Revival possession is the means by which the spirit performs, so in Rastafari identity with God is the means whereby His works are manifested. Father Owens, to date the only presenter of a comprehensive view of Rasta theology, explains:

Simple man is not completely divine, in the Rastafarian view, because he is still partly under the sway of Satan, the embodiment of all that is in opposition to God in man. Just as the God of the Rastas is not allowed to be an other-worldly, intangible being estranged from the ways of man, so also Satan is conceived by the brethren as being immediately present to the working of history: "Satan is the people who live upon earth who manifest themselves in Satan way. In other words, Satan is the man who trying to keep you down. Yes, that is the devil!" (Owens 1976: 132).

Thus, to do good means to allow the God in you to perform his work, just as to do evil means allowing Satan to perform his. But, as Owens (1976: 130) carefully notes, the brethren do not allow their identity with God to gloss over "the real distance that they know exists between man in his present state and man in his divine state to which he is summoned".

GENERAL IMPLICATIONS

The view of the Rastafari I have so far presented is one which when silhouetted against the historical backdrop of the world view of which Revivalism was the

religious expression appears as a new departure but also as a continuity. The question now is what does it all mean? This is what I think it means.

1. Rastafari must be included when considering Africa-derived religion in Jamaica and the Caribbean. It is a more authentic expression of that tradition than generally thought. Even Alleyne is hard put to find anything of African continuity in Rastafari beliefs and behaviour. "Rastafarianism", he surmises, "is probably an excellent example of a cultural form being generated virtually *ab initio* out of the social circumstances" (Alleyne 1988: 103). But evidently conscious of the implications of such a statement,⁸ he later on observes that the religion in integrating language, music and religion at a higher level than before merely continues an African and African Jamaican tradition (Alleyne 1988: 149). It is in this latter context that he regrets the paucity of knowledge that might have allowed linguistic, and obviously other, links to be proved.

2. Owing so much to the Revival past yet being so remarkably different, Rastafari may be regarded as its fulfillment. For it is clear, particularly after Marcus Garvey, that the Revival world view was inadequate as a pan-African one, since it had no really viable answer to the problem posed by white racism. After Garvey, a return to a world view which accommodated black skin as an ontological deficiency to be rectified only by transmogrification was out of the question.

3. Thus, Rasta is itself essentially a world view movement, "a system of beliefs and a state of consciousness", as Post (1978: 165) correctly put it. This accounts for its acephalous and somewhat spontaneous nature, very much the same as in the emergence of Myal and Revival. Its greatest impact lies here, and it would be quite wrong to judge it by the failure of its prophecies of repatriation.

4. Without doubt, Rastafari has manifested millennial tendencies, which, in terms of the discussion with which we started out, give the movement a political character. But it is much more fruitful to conceive of it as a cultural than as a political movement. What has accounted for its growth is not the dream of the millenium but the appropriation of a new and more coherent reality. There is the real revolution. As I have already said, Rastafari search for the millenium occurred only three times. Yet it is a fact that its periods of greatest growth occurred after them: in the decade of the 1930s and first half decade of the 1940s, when the focus was on spreading the message that Selassie was God; and in the 1960s and 1970s, with the rise of the Dreadlocks and their symbolic announcement of a new and separate identity.

This is not to deny the impulse to action which is inherent in the appropriation of any new ideas about the cosmos, and which is obviously present in the Rastafari movement. It was present, too, in Myal and Revival, which did as much in the struggle against slavery and colonialism as Vodun did in Haiti, yet

no scholar as far as I know would regard any of them as essentially activist in the broad political sense. It is one thing to recognise these impulses, it is another to make them the essence.

The general drift of this essay is perhaps not original, though no other scholar has treated the subject matter in quite the same way or has been able to document the living continuity within the Rastafari of Jamaica of a unifying world view honed out of a variegated tribal melange. The thrust of the Nettleford essays (1970), for example, was on the issue of a Black identity. He perceived, notwithstanding the millennial dream of the movement, a dream he could well appreciate being a member of the University team whose Report on the movement recommended the dispatching of an investigative Mission to Africa, that the centre stage was Jamaica itself and its Black majority. But Katrin Norris (1962) had sounded a similar note almost a decade before, when she observed the Rastafari were facing the issue of a black identity, which the black middle classes were ducking.

Among more recent scholars Ernest Cashmore and Laennec Hurbon adopt a similar position. Cashmore (1979) bluntly dismisses Rastafari's potential as a revolutionary force but argues that in fact previous scholars underestimated its importance in creating a culture. Hurbon (1986: 164) sees the movement as building a new identity for Jamaica and all the Caribbean islands, but he lapses into seeing it also as a sort of nativistic "revival of the basic core of the slave and nineteenth-century cultures", again, I think, because of the failure of scholarship to uncover its living continuity with the past. And precisely this constitutes the insight of Mervyn Alleyne, whose central thesis it is that the culture of West Africa lives on in the Jamaican world view. For example, he says,

The reluctance of Jamaican peasants to accept modern scientific agricultural techniques, including the use of chemical fertilisers and other agents that artificially quicken growth must be seen within the philosophical framework of this oneness with nature. The Rastafarians, whose complex eating taboos reflect a belief that body, mind, and nature form an integrated whole, have developed and enriched this philosophical tradition. (Alleyne 1988: 157).

It is easy to miss this because "world view ... cannot be observed directly like artifacts" (Alleyne 1988: 157), and in the study of religion where it could have been gleaned the focus has been on ritual and organisation to the neglect of the "underlying philosophies".

Alleyne's observations are well founded. Nevertheless, the approach taken in this paper to the Rastafari phenomenon raises a number of issues which need

airing. Is the existence of a world view enough of an explanation for the lack of centralised leadership in religious movements? After all, ideas do not spread *sua sponte*. They need human agents. And is it not the case that often what makes some people leaders and others not is their quicker grasp of ideas and better ability to communicate them more lucidly? What, therefore, is the place of charismatic leadership in religions of this sort? Among the Rastafari all four of the most mentioned early leaders, Howell, Hinds, Hibbert and Dunkley, were personalities thought to have heroic, if not divine, abilities. De Albuquerque tells of one Rastafari who would come every morning and reverently kiss the locks of Mortimo Planno. Henry up to the time of his death was thought to be part of the triune deity, as is Prince Emmanuel presently. The lack of central leadership should not allow us to gloss over the presence and role of leaders.

Inasmuch as changes in world views imply changes in the conception of man and his place in the world, are Africa-derived religions in the Caribbean any different from religious movements generally described as messianic, nativistic and millenarian? Burridge, for example, reduces all religions to concern "with the discovery, identification, moral relevance and ordering of different kinds of power whether these manifest themselves as thunder, or lightning, atomic fission, untrammelled desire, arrogance, impulse, apparitions, visions, or persuasive words" (Burridge 1969: 5). The logic of his argument would lead us to answer no, for although each situation may be specific, what he calls the "logic of social relations" may allow a generalised explanation. This needs to be examined.

NOTES

1. This paper was first presented at a Workshop at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, September 20-21, 1989.
2. According to Elkins (1986: 215) oils and powders are early twentieth-century additions from the influence of DeLaurence, which "significantly influenced the development of the new type of obeah in Jamaica" known as "Science".
3. Daryl Dance (1985: 5-8) collected no fewer than six, as late as the 1970s. In one, God had not made anyone Black, only straight haired people. As a set of them laughed at a monkey because his tail was on fire, he thrashed his tail around in the air. "The fire burned the hair [and made them] black". Similar stories may be found in the United States. They are taken with only half-serious intent. At the same time, like all jokes which are based on real people, they have a serious side.
4. It was also grossly misunderstood. Garvey did not campaign for all Blacks to return to Africa, but for Blacks to resettle, develop and unify the continent. With united Africa a major power in the world, Blacks could command the respect denied them by Whites. Were he leading an exodus, the

Black Star Shipping Line, linking Africa, North America and the Caribbean and Central America in a triangular trade would have made no sense.

5. Significantly, sometime after he returned from serving a ten year sentence, Henry told his congregation that the Emperor had told him on a visit to Africa that there was no need for Black people to leave Jamaica, because Africa was already in Jamaica (Chevannes 1976).

6. That experience was very formative. It first alerted me to the existence among the Rastafari of links of continuity with the historically earlier Revival religion. The insight gained was to become my central thesis. See my *Social and Ideological Origins of the Rastafari Movement in Jamaica* (1989), from which most of the examples of direct and indirect traces of Revivalism discussed in this paper are drawn.

7. Even the taboo against salt may derive from this prejudice against artificial things, since as a commodity bought in shops, salt is man-made and not "natural". Another possibility is the re-emergence of a retention from slavery. I am grateful to Dr Roland Littlewood for bringing this to my attention. See his *Pathology and Identity* (Littlewood 1987: 497-98). Alleyne (1988: 104) also mentions that avoidance of salt recurs among the Maroons of Jamaica and among Kumina cultists.

8. The burden of proof must be to show how it is possible for people to be bereft of culture. Even in rejecting the past they would have to do so in culturally meaningful ways, such as language and other symbolic ways.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The economics of the Caribbean Basin. MICHAEL B. CONNOLLY and JOHN MC DERMOTT (eds.) New York: Praeger, 1985. xxiii + 355 pp. (Cloth US \$44.95)

This collection of 15 papers is divided in five parts. The first considers the efficacy of liberalization policy in the context of small open economies. The second deals with different aspects of the external debt problem. In part three, four papers discuss various aspects of monetary policy and capital flows. Part four contains four papers which discuss government policies in a number of countries and their implications for economic performance. In the last part, three essays provide largely theoretical analyses of foreign exchange markets and their implications for economic policy.

The introductory essay by Connolly and McDermott defines the context for the rest of the book in terms of two themes. The first is that Caribbean Basin countries are both small and open. They are small, in terms of geographic area, population, and economic activity and they are open in the sense that trade in goods and financial resource flows exert considerable influence on their economic performance. The second theme is that while the existing degree of openness makes these countries vulnerable to international events, their prosperity "can only be achieved by a joint liberalization of foreign trade and reduction in the level of state intervention in the economic process" (p. xviii).

Individual essays comprise chapters 1 to 15. First, Arnold Harberger discusses the most feasible tax strategy for a small open economy according to criteria that include minimizing allocative distortions and political unpopularity, the ease and effectiveness of enforcement, and limiting tax evasion. Anne Krueger follows with several caveats about the liberalization process in small open economies as it relates to trade and payments regimes.

Emil-Maria Claassen, in turn, identifies two broad concerns in relation to the contemporary external debt problem in Latin America. The first relates to the

origins, nature, magnitude, and implications of the current external debt problem facing Latin American countries. The second concern is about the feasibility of adopting a market solution or the intervention of international organizations to fulfill the function of a lender of last resort if the international financial system is threatened by widespread insolvency.

Guillermo Ortiz traces the performance of the Mexican economy between 1977 and 1983, identifying a first phase based upon the oil boom, a period of crisis, and a period of economic adjustment.

Then, Ronald McKinnon makes a case for fixed exchange rates and exchange controls if there is direct international currency substitution. With indirect currency substitution under floating exchange rates, he suggests that individual central banks need to adjust their respective money supply to exogenous portfolio shifts in order to maintain internal price stability. In an appendix to this chapter, Jurgen Schroeder questions the latter policy since it would create interest rate volatility.

In Chapter 6, DeLisle Worrell focuses on the bank loan rate as a major link between the financial and real sectors in less developed countries. In Chapter 7, Larry Sjaastad uses data on Chile and Uruguay to support his contention that fluctuating exchange rates among major currencies and the consequent impact on the price of tradables result in real interest rate fluctuations of greater amplitude in small open economies than in larger countries.

In Chapter 8, John McDermott indicates that if commercial banks dominate the capital market and accommodate domestic credit demand in small open economies, then the domestic loan rate may diverge substantially from foreign interest rates. Mats Lundahl (Chapter 9) identifies a common orientation among successive governments as a critical explanatory variable of inefficiency in the evolution of the Haitian economy. This is the idea held by the rulers that the citizens exist for the benefit of the government and not vice versa.

In Chapter 10, Mario Blejer and Moshin Khan utilize data from nine Caribbean Basin countries to test whether public investment displaces or induces private investment. The results lend support to both effects. Theoretical explanations of these results are also discussed.

Michael Connolly links the poor economic performance of the Jamaican economy during the 1970s to the expansionary fiscal and monetary policies pursued by the government. Then, Arnolfo Camacho and Claudio Gonzalez-Vega examine the connection between the emergence of an acute economic crisis and the contraction of the financial system in Costa Rica in the 1980s. Currency substitution is identified as a major source of excess demand for foreign exchange which could explain the reduced role of the domestic currency as a store of value and a means of payment.

In Chapter 13, Peter Garber discusses the literature on speculative attack models which view shifts in asset portfolios as responses to anticipated changes in asset rates of return. In Chapter 14, Jagdeep Bhandari and Bernard Decaluwe analyze the implications of cross transactions between exchange markets in a dual exchange rate system within a rational expectations framework. Finally, Jorge Braga de Macedo utilizes the portfolio approach to develop partial and general equilibrium models of the black market for foreign exchange identifying the policy dilemmas facing policy makers.

In the introduction to the book, the editors generalize the ensuing chapters to claim that "the essays that appear here provide us with an excellent view of the Caribbean, the problems it faces, and the prospects for the future" (p. xxiii). Unfortunately, of the fifteen essays, only eight attempt to relate their analyses to the experience of Caribbean Basin economies. At the same time the exclusive focus of the book on the sources, nature, and implications of problems pertaining to external disequilibrium accounts for almost no discussion of other critical problems facing Caribbean Basin countries. There is no discussion of the significance of problems such as unemployment, the size of the informal sector, low productivity, and the more fundamental problem of slow technological change, which are as much a part of the economic reality of these countries as their external debt, overvalued exchange rates, and excessive domestic credit creation.

The message of the book is not an optimistic one. A few of the essays suggest that government intervention in Caribbean Basin countries not only tends to exacerbate existing problems but often create additional economic difficulties. Some other essays, however, indicate that liberalization is not without its problems. In particular, adverse consequences are inevitable given the limited ability of the small open economy to insulate itself from unfavorable external shocks. These findings do suggest, however, that decision makers in Caribbean Basin countries need carefully assess the relative costs and benefits of particular strategies according to the prevailing circumstances rather than on the basis of a blind adherence to the automatic superiority of an abstract policy orientation.

Finally, this book is not for the general reader, but would appeal more to the specialist interested in modeling macroeconomic concerns and problems that characterize the expanding literature on open economy macroeconomics.

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Jamaican labor migration: white capital and black labor, 1850-1930, ELIZABETH MCCLEAN PETRAS. Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988. x + 297 pp. (Paper US \$31.50)

This book is the latest in a series of scholarly writings on an extremely important historical process of West Indian labor recruitment at the behest of United States capital and state interests in Panama. Its structural perspective rounds off the series of historical accounts, which either has focussed on the Panamanian experience (Conniff 1985; Lewis 1980), on the source impacts, Barbados (Richardson 1985), on a West Indian economic history of the affair (Newton 1984).

Petras's views on international labor mobility, the international division of labor and the resultant core-periphery relations and her macro-level perspective are challenging rather than totally persuasive. She rightly identifies West Indian immigration as a process whereby marginalized individuals "become more directly a part of international social power through the sale of their labor power ... [with] the relationship of West Indian workers to U.S. capital expanding in the Caribbean". Petras examines this proposition from several perspectives. One is based on the role the workers (as essential labor) played in production itself, at the behest of U.S. capital interests. Second, their availability as global surplus labor provided the core with the necessary labor reserves without which specific activities could not proceed. Low-wage imported labor might be numerically small in relation to the total amount of labor within the core (the U.S.), but its availability is often crucial at conjunctural moments when labor in a certain category and at a certain wage threshold must be acquired from somewhere (usually the periphery) or production cannot proceed in a profitable manner. Finally, there is the aggregate and cumulative contribution of imported peripheral labor to the accumulation of capital by the core itself, a phenomenon that reinforces the inequality of capital growth between core and periphery on a world scale and indirectly contributes to the maintenance of the peripheral zones as regions of low-wage labor (p. 177-78).

Particularly effective is Petras's concluding argument on "the effects on Jamaica and Jamaicans of becoming a labor reserve within the global international division of labor". She opines that variations among the following factors *among and between labor markets (and wage zones)* are the critical structural determinants of where and why labor moves: the wage threshold consisting of monetary remuneration; the level of social wage (depressed in low-wage zones like Jamaica by the household's subsidies to production and reproduction); social legislation, protection and benefits (to capital) provided by the state; political strength of labor vis-à-vis the state; political strength of labor vis-à-vis capital; the degree and kind of rationalization of production; and the

differentials (between core and periphery) in alternatives to wage labor as sources of household income (pp. 263-64). The discourse on Jamaican labor co-optation into the global market place is convincing, but the pervasive insistence on the power and opportunities of U.S. capitalist enterprises is perhaps too dogmatic!

A problem with Petras's approach is not so much her "conviction", but rather her lack of flexibility. She could have balanced the historical account by giving due recognition to say, ecological factors as Richardson (1983) does, to the conjunctural importance of "agency", to contextual geographies as Newton does; to questions of conflictual relations between core-states to the ways in which the neo-Imperial (the United States) challenging the Imperial (Britain); and colonial state behavior differentially affected core hegemony (Jamaica in comparison to Barbados). Further, an explanation of West Indian international mobility as a livelihood strategy should recognize a complexity of behavioral, social, economic, psychological forces, which condition, and are conditioned by, their interaction with contextual and situational factors (Thomas-Hope 1978). Petras's structural argument never really gets to grips with the question of why Jamaican labor in particular, and West Indian labor in general, would be initiated into this international mobility option. Newton's more detailed – if non theoretically – description of the role of the state and of the recruiting agencies, the importance of transport links, and her recognition that it wasn't just the depressed wage-levels in Jamaica, but the socio-psychological aversion to plantation-work derived from the slavery experience, that prompted the search for material opportunities "off the island", does stand up better to scrutiny than Petras's occasional asides on the initiation process.

There are passages interspersed in this treatment of Jamaican labor migration which either could have been omitted or, if included, further elaborated to include brief accounts of "Jamaicans at home" in Chapters 9 and 10, while arguing further about the power of U.S. capitalist interests to exercise dominance over labor-importing societies, scarcely does justice to the complex impacts of temporary emigration and return, and international circulation on West Indian source countries and their social transitions. Richardson's (1985) account of transformations wrought in Barbados by "Panama money" demonstrates in a much more convincing manner the multifaceted nature of returnee and remittance impacts on that West Indian societies, even as they served as a reservoir of labor.

The accounts of the Panama experience by Conniff and Lewis are duplicated to a considerable degree in Petras's book, and the historical record can now be said to be thoroughly documented. The jury may still be out on which specific conditions prevailed to initiate Jamaican labor to undertake temporary or permanent emigration as a livelihood tradition, to transform migration potential

into active mobility, but these complementary accounts on the Panama experience begin to provide us with clues on the mix of "structure and agency" determinant conditions. Petras's structural account, at the very least, is an important informative construct.

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Custom and conflict on a Bahamian out-island. HEROME WENDELL LURRY-WRIGHT. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1987. xxii + 188 pp. (Cloth US \$24.75; Paper US \$12.75)

When Jerome Wendell Lurry-Wright arrived in Mayaguana, the Bahamian out-island that serves as the setting for his legal ethnography, he was distressed to find that the Magistrate's Courts had not met for over a year. How could he study law and conflict in a society without active law courts? Like legal anthropologists before him, he adopted the "trouble case" method, which

involves collecting instances of informal dispute resolution and court cases from previous years. The resulting volume includes an ethnography of Mayaguana, typologies of conflict and conflict resolution, an analysis of choice of disputing options, and appendices of legal cases. Although written in the genre of traditional legal anthropology, Lurry-Wright's volume aspires to an innovative theoretical and analytic approach articulated in his claim that "[i]n the future, law and legal institutions are likely to be analyzed simultaneously from a long-term historical perspective, and from the perspective of individual centered, short-term, choice-making, instrumental action and interaction" (p. ix). With the recent publication of a history of legal change in Tanzania (Moore 1986), concern with the past is not the "future" of legal anthropology but, rather, the present, and Lurry-Wright's case study contributes to that endeavor. By contrast, his second concern – choice of disputing forum – should be relegated to anthropology's past. The focus on individual cognition in the analysis of disputing choices detracts from the contribution that an historically-oriented legal ethnography can make to theories of law and social process and to the study of the legal ramifications of capitalist expansion in the region.

Lurry-Wright describes a fascinating case of legal change. He documents the effect on disputing patterns of a profound shift in Mayaguana's economy, specifically the operation of a U.S. missile tracking base on the island from 1951 to the early 1960's. During those years, residents and the many "outsiders" employed on the island took their disputes to the Magistrate's Courts thus forsaking "traditional" means of conflict resolution, primarily arbitration by Church ministers. When the base closed and outsiders moved away, residents resumed pre-base conflict resolution patterns. Lurry-Wright's analysis relates these specific alterations in dispute resolution to broader social change associated with the incursion of a wage labor economy, including decreased interdependence of residents, conflict over new wealth, and the marginalization of religious authorities.

The detailed demonstration of how conflict and its resolution respond dramatically to the introduction of a wage labor economy furthers understanding of law and social process; however, Lurry-Wright's depiction of the change as swift and, ultimately, reversible is deceptively neat. Scholarship of the region suggests it is unlikely that the influence of a wage labor economy on life in Mayaguana disappeared when the base closed. Lurry-Wright's own demographic data (for example, the finding that since the early 1960's men routinely leave the island for employment) belie the notion that life returned to pre-base "tradition". Seemingly similar disputing patterns are not a reversion but rather the result of broad social and economic transformations explored only tangentially in the text.

Much of Lurry-Wright's analysis involves presenting data on individual disputing choices that support five hypotheses derived from other legal ethnography: 1) disputants choose disputing forums where they think they will win; 2) disputants present issues strategically; 3) disputants take cases to the forum closest to their own social system; 4) disputants treat the decision given in a forum as one stage in the settlement process; and 5) serious disputes are more likely to be heard in forums where there are fewer interpersonal connections among participants. All of these hypotheses concern the decision-making processes of individual disputants, and the decisions of Mayaguana residents are similar to those of disputants in other communities cross-culturally.

By analyzing choice of forum as primarily a decision-making task, Lurry-Wright ignores the effect of individual choices on ongoing social processes, such as the way that disputants participate in the legitimation of institutions. What Lurry-Wright treats as individual choices between religion and law for conflict resolution might be better characterized and analyzed as the making of the Church and the State by individuals interacting out of their changing interests in a shifting economy. In post-base Mayaguana, for example, men choose the Church for dispute resolution; yet, they rarely participate in Church activities or even become members. Thus, the relation between individual disputing choices and institutional legitimacy is quite complex, with enormous implications for the empowerment of institutions, social groups, and individuals. Exploring this relation more fully than Lurry-Wright has in this volume is a challenge for legal anthropologies of the future.

Lurry-Wright, explicitly attentive to gender relations, provides the data to begin that type of analysis with respect to conflict between men and women. In the post-base period Mayaguana men seek resolution of domestic conflict through the Church, while women look to secular courts and frequently threaten to take conflict there. Experience with Magistrate's Courts at the time of the base's operation demonstrated to women that they could call on the power of the government to control men's behavior. Gender-specific choices in disputing, especially those that empower women, have implications for gender relations as well as for the legitimacy of the Church, the Magistrate's Courts, and the Bahamian government in the community. Lurry-Wright describes the choices but fails to consider seriously the participation of men and women in the making of institutions, as they struggle together, separately, and against each other when confronted with the incursion of capital.

Much of Lurry-Wright's brief text has the flat, formulaic quality typical of choice of forum studies in which decisions are reported but where decision-makers are rarely afforded a voice through the text. By contrast, Mayaguana's residents speak articulately, coarsely, and passionately through the trouble-cases provided in the extensive appendices. Lurry-Wright's text offers only limited,

poorly edited examples and rarely refers to the appended cases; therefore, readers should skim through the appendices first, to get the flavor of cases as argued, of life as lived on Mayaguana.

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1,000 proverbes créoles de la Caraïbe francophone. AGENCE DE COOPERATION CULTURELLE ET TECHNIQUE. Paris: Editions Caribéennes, 1987. 114 pp. (Cloth France 57 francs)

1,000 proverbes créoles de la Caraïbe francophone, prepared and published by the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (l'Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique, or ACCT) innovatively compiles proverbs in French-based Creole from four Caribbean countries: Dominica, Guadeloupe, Haiti, and St-Lucia, gathered by four groups of collectors. The introduction clearly defines the purpose of the publication: to show that the proverbs are still alive; to acknowledge the cultural unity of the various societies; and to demonstrate that the richness of this literature belongs to the entire French-speaking world.

The primary objective of the book is indeed very challenging in its apparent facility, since anyone connected with Caribbean cultures knows at least intuitively that proverbs are still alive, but would have a more difficult time proving it. Unfortunately, the formulated wish of the ACCT does not go far. The mere fact of listing the thousand proverbs in one or another of the French-based Creoles does not demonstrate their actual use by the respective populations. One has to deplore the lack of indications on the frequency or conditions of use of the proverbs. Are all the proverbs used in the same manner, or in similar circumstances and situations, by all sectors of the population? Such questions should have been at least raised if the compilers intended to truly "verify the permanence of oral traditions", as they state on the back cover.

Another fundamental issue which is not addressed in the book is that of the criteria of selection. In the introduction, ACCT mentioned with satisfaction that the Guadeloupean and Haitian collectors have made some "unconscious" choices since they have not collected proverbs that are "translations of known French proverbs" (p. 8). Had the collection been carefully monitored, subjective choices could have been avoided or at least clearly identified and not left to pure speculations. Perhaps, the two other groups of collectors have also made subjective choices, less easy to identify or apprehend? Further, ACCT's own criteria to reduce the number of proverbs from 4,000 to 1,000 also stay undefined. Were the themes, the language, or the sheer number the most important criterion? These questions are certainly important for anyone interested in interpreting the information presented in the book.

While – and partly because – the promises of the book stay generally unfulfilled, *1,000 proverbes créoles de la Caraïbe francophone* remains a valuable source of information and a very good indication of the research that can and need to be done in this particular area. The researchers listed firstly 93 common core proverbs, i.e. proverbs conveying the same meaning. What is fascinating is that in many cases, the proverbs follow a strikingly similar formulation. Generally, the references stayed within the natural world (sun, moon, stars, animals, plants). On page 29, for a proverb that rendered the idea "Mind your own business", the animal reference was used by all four countries, even though the chosen animals varied. Sometimes, the proverbs even reach a word for word similarity (on p. 21, for example). Although the evident cultural unity between the four societies presents in itself a vast field of study, it would also be interesting to further explore closer similarities between two or three of the countries involved.

The ACCT warns the readers of the unsuitability of some of the translations, and in view of the difficulties involved in all attempts to recapture the richness and subtlety of any oral literature, one should indeed be indulgent. The collection from Guadeloupe in particular, presented first the literal translations and the appropriate French interpretation, allowing the non-Creole reader to grasp the cultural tone of the proverbs. However, throughout the book, there were some literal translations presented without any other reference, and in other cases, the translation was shockingly inadequate. For example, the Haitian proverb "Zanmi lwen se lajan sere", which conveys the meaning that you can always count on your friends even if your friends are far away (for they serve as an investment upon which you can draw in times of need), was translated "Quand les amis sont loin, on fait des économies" (p. 39): When friends are far, one saves money. Certainly, a more careful reading could have reduced or eliminated such obvious misinterpretations.

However, despite its limitations, the book does convey the wisdom, richness, and beauty of Caribbean oral traditions. The cultural similarities between these societies transpire in the choice of the themes, the common schemes of thought, the shared concerns and values. ACCT should be commended for publications of this type, which bring Caribbean cultures to a world-wide community of francophone readers. Through the pages of the book, the proverbs seem to be playing with each other in a delightful "lago kache" (hide and seek) where words take special meaning and power. *1,000 proverbes créoles de la Caraïbe francophone* leaves anyone interested in the Caribbean with the desire to learn more about the region's cultural richness through the similarities and diversities of one of its subparts.

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The colonial legacy in Caribbean literature. AMON SABA SAAKANA. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, Inc. 1987. 128 pp. (Cloth US \$24.95; Paper US \$7.95)

This work falls into the realm of decolonizing criticism, practised most notably by the Nigerian critic Chinweizu, who, with Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike, published *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature* in 1983. Not surprisingly, the preface to Saakana's volume is by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, whose essays laid much of the groundwork for the Chinweizu study. The main purpose of all of these studies is to halt what Ngugi here terms "cultural engineering by imperialism" by focusing upon the "history of resistance" rather than the "history of subjugation". They insist that African or Caribbean authors and critics must base their works upon a vision of their society as resistant to colonial domination, and that to fail to do so both diminishes their accomplishments and retards the process of cultural decolonization.

Previous works on Caribbean literature have emphasized the resistant quality of Caribbean literature. For example, Selwyn Cudjoe argues in *Resistance and Caribbean Literature* (1980) that all literature reflects history, that Caribbean history is a history of resistance, and that Caribbean literature therefore reflects this particular history. But Saakana differs from such critics in that he believes that literature may *not* always reflect history and that Caribbean literature, in particular, has failed to do so. In contrast to such other expressions of Caribbean

life as Salsa, Calypso, Reggae, and Kadance – all of which are rooted in Afro-Caribbean popular culture – Caribbean literature, because of its authors' "acceptance of middle-class aspirations and goals" (p. 14), "of the benefits bestowed by a British educational system" (p. 111), is too much an expression of the colonizer rather than of the colonized. What Saakana advocates, therefore, is that writers no longer accept "external" cultural and literary traditions but look to "internal" popular culture as their source.

Saakana's basic argument that the writer, no less than his subject, has been a victim of colonialism – that writers have been "unconscious vectors of their colonial education and consciousness" (p. 14) – is a powerful one, and it is the logical extension of the idea that all literature reflects history – that, to put the argument another way, history may prevent the author from creating literature that reflects history. Because of the colonization of the mind, the writer has had no choice but to write in the tradition of the colonizer's literature. Even if his intention were to do otherwise, he would still be caught by his own duality. But Saakana muddies this argument by simultaneously suggesting that the writer might have some choice.

Saakana believes that the real history of the Caribbean is one of successful resistance to imperialism (a belief that in itself diminishes his position on the colonization of the mind) and that this history has not been revealed in literature because of the authors' "limited vision and impoverished knowledge of the historical past" – "a result of the colonial status of the Caribbean as a region and the massive effort devoted to inculcating a deliberate feeling of inferiority and weakness in its young writers and intellectuals" (p. 18). But at the same time he seems to acknowledge that another view of Caribbean history is possible when he says, at the end of a condemnation of Ralph de Boissiere's *Crown Jewel* (1952), that he does not wish "to beg that the writer, in an over-zealous dream, depicts the victorious workers when reality is different, but that the requirements of progress even in defeat, of the will of resolve, of striving to transcend the social circumstances of history, are the standards by which the writer *must* be judged" (p. 88). In other words, Caribbean reality is victorious resistance, but if the reality is not victorious resistance, the writer has an obligation to pretend it is, though Saakana would not want the writer to speak falsely.

This muddleheadedness epitomizes the central problem with Saakana's work – his insistence that the writer be someone he isn't, a position that undercuts his basic argument that the writer cannot be other than what colonialism has made him. H.G. de Lisser's *Jane's Career* (1914), fails to be authentic Caribbean literature because the story "perpetuates a lie: social forces are to be outwitted, not confronted with violence". Broglie betrays the strikers, and Jane, who marries him, mimics her former colonized employer. Instead, De Lisser should

have depicted Broglie as a leader of a collective, successful, and, it is assumed, violent struggle and Jane as a rebel against white, or brown, European middle-class standards. But, as Saakana points out, De Lisser himself was "simultaneously progressive and reactionary, and certainly had no faith in the black poor governing themselves". In other words, De Lisser wrote from his own perspective as one of the colonized. What Saakana asks the reader to do is to judge such writers not according to the fidelity with which they represent their world as they see it, but rather according to the success with which they fake someone else's perception of their world – in particular, that of such critics as Saakana. If previous critics betrayed the cause of Anglophone African or Caribbean literature by their insistence on imitation of British literature, contemporary critics might betray it by their insistence on the substitution of perceptions that are equally secondhand.

This insistence that the writer not be true to himself – or that, magically, the writer be someone he isn't – underlies all of Saakana's judgements. The absurd lengths to which this demand takes Saakana can be seen in his critique of Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1968). Saakana criticizes Rhys for not permitting the black woman Christophine to triumph over Rochester, oblivious to the fact that without Rochester's success in combatting her power and carrying off his West Indian heiress we wouldn't have either *Jane Eyre* or *Wide Sargasso Sea*. (Indeed, one wonders whether Saakana has read *Jane Eyre*, since he says *Wide Sargasso Sea* "ends on a note of hope ... as Antoinette is attempting escape" (p. 61). She is deluded: her escape, as we know from *Jane Eyre*, is death).

The writers that Saakana chooses to illustrate the failure of Caribbean literature are significant ones. To his credit, he does not exempt George Lamming and Edward Kamau Brathwaite – the two authors whom Ngugi feels should have been given "more extended analysis" and who have traditionally been singled out as decolonized Caribbean writers. His most detailed study is of V.S. Naipaul, whom Saakana shows to be a victim of colonialism, while simultaneously suggesting that the psychological trauma he has undergone has been his own fault. Saakana can't have it both ways. But whether in his personal life Naipaul has resisted victimization sufficiently or not, he has created characters who realistically portray the divided self that colonized people suffer.

All of which takes us back to the basic assumption of this volume: that Caribbean history is the history of resistance. Writers of history tend to focus upon events involving groups of people, portraying the protagonists in these events as emblems of issues, and assume, if they do not substantiate, that the spaces between the events are filled with lesser moments of the same sort. But authors of imaginative works are usually consumed with the day-to-day existence of ordinary individuals. Whereas Caribbean historians may very well view Caribbean history as a series of successful, violent struggles of the masses

of the people against colonialism, Caribbean writers of fiction and poetry may see Caribbean life much as Henry David Thoreau saw life in general – as people leading lives of quiet desperation. Writers have to write about what they are most familiar with, and even after studying a stack of books on Caribbean history proclaiming it as the record of violent mass resistance against imperialism, they may still be truer to Caribbean life – and hence to a Caribbean history of another sort – if they depict figures who either embrace the values of the colonizer as their own or who in desperation resign themselves to these values or who are defeated struggling against them or who struggle, perhaps without violence, towards a victory of the individual, if not the mass, soul.

Not only does Saakana insist that Caribbean history and literature have the same content, but he places all of Caribbean history and all of Caribbean literature under the same umbrellas. Nowhere does he say he is writing about the Anglophone Caribbean, but all of his examples come from that division of the Caribbean. Moreover, Saakana jumps from one area of the Anglophone Caribbean to the next with such rapidity that the reader is left with the illusion that all of the separate histories and separate literatures of these areas are the same. Indeed, Saakana tries to do far too much in too few pages, and the result is flimsy, more like a compendium of observations than a sustained analysis. The work is a little over 100 pages long, but in it the author purports to give us the history of Caribbean resistance and Caribbean literature, an analysis of Caribbean language, and examinations of several particular Caribbean authors. When one considers that each area of the Anglophone Caribbean has its own history of resistance, its own literary history, its own complex world of language, its own stable of authors, one glimpses the weakness of this volume.

The problems of this work are exacerbated by a variety of technical flaws, the most important of these being a slapdash construction of sentences, which often don't make any sense at all.

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Oral literature of the Trio Indians of Surinam. CEES KOELEWIJN in collaboration with PETER RIVIÈRE. Dordrecht and Providence: Foris Publications, 1987. (Caribbean Series 6, KITLV/Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology). xiv + 312 pp. (Paper Netherlands DFL. 40,-)

This book consists of one hundred myths and stories collected by Cees Koelewijn, a schoolteacher for eight years (1973-81) among the Trio Indians at the Indian village of Tepoe on the upper Tapanahony river in Suriname. There is a useful short Introduction on the Trio, and a brief concluding Commentary which gives some analysis of the texts, both by Peter Rivière. They are intended to do no more than place the stories in their cultural and historical context.

The Trio, of the Tapanahony-Paroe rivers area of the Suriname-Brazil border, were independent until 1959, when they came under intensive mission influence – Fundamentalist Protestant in Suriname and Roman Catholic in Brazil. From being dispersed in small villages, the population became aggregated in a few large mission villages where they underwent rapid and radical social change. In Suriname the provision of medical care and education soon was taken over by a Dutch-Surinamese Foundation which trained Trio to staff these services. In his Introduction, Rivière suggests that there is evidence that the Trio have begun to re-establish a more traditional pattern of dispersed settlement while maintaining contact with the missions as commercial, medical, and educational centres (p. 4), and that there has been a recent revival of smoking and drinking alcoholic beverages (p. 4), which were important elements of traditional culture. This may indicate a growing interest among the Trio in the idea of Trio culture and identity, something which is implied by Peter Kloos in his Forward to the book. The data were collected before the current guerrilla war in the interior of Suriname, and the Introduction does not mention any consequences of this development.

During his residence among the Trio, Koelewijn found that young people were losing interest in their traditions and culture. Assisted by an ex-shaman, Tëmëta, who supplied him with most of the stories, he collected 105 texts which he transcribed into Trio, the Indians having been taught to read and write in their native language by the missionaries. His intention was to provide the Trio, in their own language, with a record of their traditional oral literature. A two-volume work was produced in collaboration with Dr Peter Rivière and published by the Algemeen Diakonaal Bureau.

The present work is a development, in English, from the original project, with the Introduction and Commentary added. Its intention is to provide "a readable English translation with a mild Trio flavour (p. xii)". In the editing a few of the original texts have been omitted, as has some genealogical material, and much of the onomatopoeia characteristic of Trio story telling has been eliminated. In

order to convey some of the flavour of the original, the Preface contains examples of direct translation from the Trio (p. xiii) and two of the texts (texts 70, 100) are left closer to the original than are the others. In addition, text 100 is also reproduced in Trio.

The stories are loosely ordered according to content, so that origin myths are grouped together, as are myths about the adventures of human beings with spirits, stories of historical events, and fable-like stories. These are not hard and fast classifications. They place the stories in some type of sequence. Among themes prominent in the texts are features of traditional Trio life such as the obligation of a man to supply his close affines with meat; trading partnerships; marriage with a cross-cousin or a sister's daughter; shamanism; and revenge killing. Rivière's Introduction places these in their cultural context. Particularly prominent are the themes of shamanism and revenge killings, which in some texts produce stories with elements reminiscent of classical Greek tragedy. Take for example text 65, "The Feud by Accident", in which the loving relationship between a husband and wife is tragically shattered when, during amorous play, she thoughtlessly pats the tip of his erect penis with a hot spoon and kills him. In spite of her obvious grief and the fact that the homicide was clearly accidental, her dead husband's younger brother, who marries her, feels constrained to kill her in revenge. He does so in a singularly gruesome manner, which is copied by the dead woman's brothers when they avenge her in their turn.

Many of the stories emphasize ideal Trio behavior by focussing on its converse. Common to many of the texts is the "maraso", the individual who is unteachable, who does not think before he acts, who does not listen to what he is told and who thinks he knows everything. As a result his actions not only bring grief upon himself, they frequently cause some fundamental and irreparable loss to the Trio as a whole. Antisocial activities, such as gossip and drunken misbehaviour, cause harm. Inhuman actions, such as matricide or patricide, which would be unthinkable in normal life, often are associated with shamans. The shaman has acquired special powers and it is his duty to use them to protect his people, but he may use them for evil purposes, for his own benefit and to their detriment. Several stories associate shamans with cannibalism, a quality shared with non-Trio such as the Akurijo (text 81), Bush Negroes (text 86), and Europeans (texts 86, 91).

Not surprisingly, the myths show some evidence of possible Christian influence, for example the idea of resurrection (or some similar process) after three days (texts 4, 7), and the role of birds in the aftermath of a great flood (text 44). In his discussion of Trio culture and contemporary developments, Rivière stresses the syncretic and changing aspect of myth and religion, but believes the stories presented here show little change in their main themes from

those of traditional Trio myths (pp. 12-13). His short concluding Commentary on the stories contains a useful comparison of Trio myths with those of the Amazonian culture area in general (pp. 300-04). He also does some structuralist interpretation of the meaning of the Trio stories, concluding that they are constructed around the relationship between the visible and the invisible world, and that this is a moral and a causal relationship as well as a physical and spatial one. Accordingly, it is from this mixture that the stories derive their force for the Trio (p. 309).

Such a conclusion appears open to one common criticism of structuralism, namely that it takes complex ways to reach what appear to be simple and obvious conclusions, but the Commentary is intended to be brief and cannot attempt a more detailed analysis. Similarly, Rivière can only touch on the interpretation of the symbols contained in the stories, but is able to make some interesting suggestions about their meanings nonetheless.

To social scientists the main value of this book is the contribution it makes to myths of the Amazonian region, and of tropical forest Amerindians in general. It adds to the material already published in this field, and provides further data for the analysis of myths from this area, and that of myth and oral history in general. For ethnographers, it is a valuable addition to the data on Trio culture. It is also of interest to the student of oral history and mythology. Finally, one hopes that the original project will prove of value to the Trio themselves too.

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Sojourners of the Caribbean: ethnogenesis and ethnohistory of the Garifuna.
NANCIE L. GONZALEZ. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988. xi + 253 pp.
(Cloth US \$29.95)

This book tells the story of the Garifuna, a people with both Amerindian and African roots, whose ancestors were first defeated, then deracinated by the British from the Eastern Caribbean island of St Vincent in 1797 and deported to the bleak islands off the Central American coastline.

Within a matter of weeks they had succeeded in negotiating with the Spanish on the mainland both to agree to their resettlement on the coast and to transport them thither. Thanks to their high birth rate and their prowess in warfare,

fishing, forestry and agriculture they soon began to play an important part in the economic and sociopolitical life of the Atlantic Coast, astutely playing off the imperial powers against each other. In time a new sense of Garifuna identity and separateness evolved. Miscegenation with the Miskitos (another Afroamerican people) and other Blacks – with whom the Black Caribs coexisted, at times uneasily, in the emerging nation states of Honduras, Belize and Guatemala – did not destroy the self identification of the Garifuna.

Nancie Gonzalez ably documents the various threads in this fascinating history. She also brings considerable scholarship to bear on her analysis of the cultural and social factors that underlie ethnicity. The author's contact with the Garifuna dates back to 1955 and she has come to achieve the proud status of "a female elder" (p. 96). She has also done research into the historical roots of the Garifuna in the archives of metropolitan and Central American libraries and also in St Vincent itself.

Fascinating as this wealth of historical detail undoubtedly is, not all of it bears directly on the ethnogenesis and ethnohistory of the Garifuna, nor does it provide a complete picture of the structural elements of ethnicity. The book is a solid ethnography, but falls short of its blurb "... to examine the nature of ethnicity".

Gonzalez began the historical research around 1975 "with the intent of identifying and examining Black Carib roots" (p. 4). The impressive volume of her bibliographic citations notwithstanding, Gonzalez did not follow up some important leads central to her major theses on retentions and syncretisms. She supplies weighty data on diet, surnames, cultivation, domesticity... the meat and drink of ethnography. More focussed research would have confirmed the similarities between the Garifuna and other Caribbean peoples while strengthening her theoretical arguments as well as her ethnohistorical evidence.

In her discussion of the Amerindian roots of the Garifuna, Gonzalez often cites W.C. Farabee as an authority on Amerindian life on the mainland. She would have been on firmer ground had she relied on more authoritative sources for early mainland Carib societies. The works of W.E. Roth and the Schomburgk brothers, to name two standard sources, would have allowed her to sift more carefully the conjectures of Farabee and avoid the error, for instance, of seeing rectangular houses as an African influence on the Island Caribs.

There is also the ethnocentric declaration that "At some point before leaving St Vincent, oratory skills were learned..." (p. 31). The natural eloquence of Amerindian peoples is attested to in many of the early sources and one example of oratorical display is related in Richard Schomburgk's account of meeting a Makushi in an isolated settlement in 1842 (vol. 2, 1922: 165). The Island Caribs did not need European marauders to teach them eloquence.

Regarding the Amerindian roots of the Garifuna, Gonzalez could easily have traced the medicinal use of tobacco, as well as the well-known Garifuna independence and migratory patterns, back to an Amerindian past. She does briefly mention tobacco but the evidence of this Amerindian cultigen being still central to Amerindian medicine today provides yet another fruitful lead, which she twice fails to follow up.

But for those interested in the pan-Caribbean dimension in any ethnography of one of the area's peoples, the weakest section of this work centers around the historical roots of Garifuna ancestor rites. While Gonzalez does link the Garifuna *chugu* or *dugu* to African ancestral spirit worship, her analysis of the historical evidence is superficial and the argument, as a result, inconclusive.

The John Canoe, for example (mentioned only twice and almost in passing by Gonzalez) which is linked to obeah in some Caribbean territories (perhaps in Central America also since it survives in Guatemala (p. 95)) traces its etymological roots back to West Africa. *Konnu* has been glossed as "spirit" or "avenging spirit" which is what the latter-day masquerade (as John Canoe is known in Guyana) is about: the cleansing of the community by the spirits. The *dugu*, which has increased in popularity in recent years, among both Central American Garifuna and those in the diaspora, sits squarely in this tradition.

Gonzalez's accounts of the *dugu*, together with her photographs of children practicing to be masked dancers and stilt walkers and of the John Canoe, offer only tantalizing glimpses of the links between the Garifuna and many other Caribbean peoples. These go back to Ga and Yoruba festivals also containing the elements of mask making, songs and dances, feasts and rum drinking. Creighton's recent scholarship establishes that this mask-making tradition goes back to the Yoruba *Egungun*. There is none of this analysis in Gonzalez.

What Gonzalez's work lacks in ethnohistorical research is balanced by her exploration of the structural principle of ethnicity and current Garifuna lifeways. In her book we view a people who are rapidly losing their language and the land base which was once theirs in Central America and who as a result largely believe that the only viable future lies in migration to the North.

These are depressingly familiar themes and one can only speculate for how much longer the clinging to the old ways of ancestor worship will stave off the inexorable homogenization which Gonzalez also documents. In this context Gonzalez's early quotation of the words of a Black Carib in 1797 assumes a special poignancy: "I do not command in the name of anyone. I am not English, nor French, nor Spanish, nor do I care to be any of these. I am a Carib, a Carib subordinate to no one. I do not care to be more or to have more than I have" (p. 48).

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Lords of the Tiger Spirit: a history of the Caribs in colonial Venezuela and Guyana 1498-1820. NEIL L. WHITEHEAD. Dordrecht and Providence: Foris Publications, 1988. (Caribbean Series 10, KITLV/Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology.) x + 250 pp. (Paper Netherlands Dfl. 35,-)

This book is the first fruit of an ambitious project designed, in the author's own words, "... to provide a historical narrative and analysis of the fate of Carib populations... [so that] the variety of social pressures exerted on Carib groups in Guyana and particularly the Orinoco Basin can be uncovered and the origins of their current plight made clearer" (p. 1). In addition to an ethnographic stint in French Guyana of unstated time and duration, Whitehead examined historical records in Spain, The Netherlands, and Great Britain, as well as a good bit of the pertinent literature in anthropology and history. The text, although modified, retains the tenor of the doctoral thesis for which it was originally written. It is also marred by frequent misspellings, grammatical errors and awkward circumlocutions and phrasing.

Nevertheless, the effort was worthwhile, for Whitehead has uncovered a mass of previously unknown references to the various groups collectively termed "Carib" by the first European visitors and settlers, and, later, "Karinya" by the people themselves. At times this anthropologist became wearied by the historical detail provided, wondering whether an accounting of the almost day-by-day adventures of various European personalities was necessary to the analysis. The narrative shifts from such description to analysis of various problems of interest to anthropologists, such as the nature of the aboriginal society, including settlement patterns, community and kinship organization and structure, subsistence, trade, warfare and raiding, and leadership.

An entire, penultimate, chapter is devoted to cannibalism and slavery, in which the two are discussed in relation to European attitudes (Whitehead

suggests "obsessions" might often be more correct) and laws that determined the way in which Caribs were branded as being subhuman, and therefore appropriate targets for extermination or enslavement. At the same time, he shows that traditional internecine conflict among Caribs as well as between Caribs and other groups, contributed to their fate.

Still, his conclusion is that, contrary to much of previous scholarly opinion, the surviving Caribs did not simply retreat or submit to missionization. Rather, Whitehead maintains, their "nation" survived by continued resistance to both missionary and military conquest, as well as through the absorption of other Indian groups that had suffered population losses to the point of being unable to maintain a viable society. He believes the sense of "being Carib" observable among modern South American Caribs illustrates a continuity of ethnic consciousness at least since conquest times.

Although many will quibble with specific details and interpretations, this is a book that must be read by all Carib scholars, as well as ethnohistorians in general, for Whitehead has managed to present the conquest and its aftermath in the Orinoco region from the perspective of not only the different European competitors, including both national and ecclesiastical entities, but also of the Caribs themselves. He has turned the seemingly contradictory European accounts into indicators of their own aspirations and frustrations, which in turn permit a modification or reinterpretation of their observations and utterances regarding the Caribs.

As one who has spent years studying the so-called Black Caribs, themselves descendants of Island Caribs or Kalinago – who often joined with their distant South American Karinya cousins in resisting the European onslaught, I was duly impressed with the mass of information presented, which may force me to reconsider some of my conclusions concerning the present-day Garifuna, or more properly, Garinagu (Kalinago). The tendency of the latter to absorb other peoples, as well as their pride in "being Carib" in spite of the fact that their language is basically Arawakan and their racial makeup largely African, may well stem from the same influences suggested by Whitehead.

The social and cultural distinctions between the prehistoric and historic Arawak and Carib are not clarified here – rather, they are further blurred. Even the description of the political tensions that all agreed existed between these groups is confusing. Whitehead indicates that the Caribs had driven the Arawaks out of the Orinoco Basin by the mid-17th century (pp. 17-18). Yet, he also emphasizes the kinship, trading, and military alliances between the Island Caribs (Kalinago) and mainland Caribs at the same time (pp. 87, 95). Since linguistic and ethnohistorical evidence suggests that the former were primarily Arawaks who had been infiltrated by Caribs at a time not long before, it is clear that being "driven out" may have meant merely absorption or cooptation.

Despite the importance of the new information and Whitehead's interpretations of it, he should have recognized others who have blazed the trail before him. The record is not quite so blank or so in opposition as he pretends. He cites Rouse's works of 1948, but ignores his more recent and important contributions (1983, 1986). Similarly, an important article by Myers on Carib cannibalism is uncited (1984), as are most of the papers given in a symposium on Caribs at the 44th International Congress of Americanists in Manchester, England, although his citation of Dreyfus (1982) indicates that he was aware of that event. Finally, some of his suggestions concerning the effect of the native sociopolitical organization in determining the reaction to the conquest were anticipated in a classic article by Service.

Again, I stress that the book contains important information and insights. I wish only that it had been better written and presented.

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The powerless people. ANDREW SANDERS. London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Publishers Ltd., 1987. iv + 220 pp. (Paper UK £9.95)

This volume is concerned with an Amerindian village, called "Orealla", located on the Guyanese bank of the Corentyn river. The author intends to present an analysis of the "folk" concepts *mattie*, *eyepass*, *manners and respect* and *Indian right* as they were employed by the Amerindian villagers in the early sixties. He

Chapter Two, "St. Domingan refugees in the Lower South," celebrates the contribution of the St. Domingan refugees and the slaves they took with them in maintaining a unique French Creole identity in the Mississippi Valley and especially in Louisiana. Hunt reminds us that if French was still the official language of the New Orleans City Council twenty-five years after the Americans took over the government of the territory, it was in a large measure thanks to the refugees from St. Domingue. He points out their influence on local architecture, cuisine, intellectual life and customs; he surveys the French language press in New Orleans, and gives thumbnail biographies of some St. Domingan refugees who started a new life in the American South and achieved success in various endeavors. This chapter utilizes a number of original sources, and seems to me the most interesting in the book.

Chapter Three deals with "Toussaint's image in antebellum America," and is also quite interesting. Hunt explains why Toussaint Louverture was universally celebrated in the United States, by Jeffersonian Republicans as well as American Federalists. He was respected as a responsible leader, a law-and-order no-nonsense statesman who imposed a stringent labor code on his newly-freed compatriots, reassured the White planters and thereby improved the economy; most of all, he was admired for having opposed the French expeditionary force, seen at the time less as fellow whites than as dangerous Jacobin revolutionaries whose ideas might well come to subvert the social order in the United States. Hunt concludes that "Americans who were proslavery or antislavery were willing to abandon their racial stereotypes when it was to their advantage to do so. (...) Toussaint Louverture's fate became a rallying cry for those American Federalists who wished to discredit the French in view of the excesses of the French Revolution and their own desire for increased commerce with the French West Indies. Even southern slave owners were more anti-French than anti-Negro: The French threat to their expansionist plans in the Mississippi valley was immediate" (p. 87). In American eyes, Louverture's successor Dessalines was obviously a disaster, but Hunt says nothing about American reactions to King Henry Christophe, whose achievements paralleled Toussaint's and who, furthermore, encouraged the cultural, economic and religious influence of Anglo-Saxon Protestants in his realm (he engaged two maiden ladies from New England as tutors to the royal princesses). It would have been interesting to find out whether Christophe was ignored or denigrated in the United States, and if so why.

Chapters Four and Five are respectively entitled "The Southern Response to the Haitian Revolution" and "Blacks and their Allies Respond" and seem to me disappointing. To begin with, Hunt treats the whole gamut of American responses not only to the Haitian Revolution, but to subsequent developments in the country up to the outbreak of the War Between the States; it is difficult

to do so in a mere eighty pages without laying oneself open to accusations of incompleteness and superficiality. Be that as it may, what these two chapters illustrate is well-known and fairly obvious: Southerners and racists were obsessed by the Haitian Revolution, and suspected that all attempts by American slaves to revolts were directly or indirectly inspired by the "Black Jacobins." They offered the excesses of the Revolution as proof that "Slaves simply were not ready to enjoy the privilege of liberty (... and that) any attempt to force 'French ideas' upon them would destroy southern civilization" (p. 124). The instability and abuses that marred the first half-century of Haitian history convinced white southerners and their allies that slavery "also protected the blacks from themselves" (p. 132). To be sure, Americans were not the only ones to deride and ridicule Haitians and, by extension, Blacks. Emperor Faustin Soulouque, whom Hunt mentions in passing, was the butt of racist derision on the part of numerous French travellers, cartoonists and no less a poet than Victor Hugo. Hunt also mentions that Gobineau's *Inequality of human races* was translated and widely read in the United States, but says nothing of what influence it had, if any, and what rebuttals it inspired, if any.

Conversely, to give the lie to their opponents, anti-slavery and anti-racist writers exalted the Haitian war of Independence and stressed the achievements of independent Haiti while excusing or explaining away her failures. Hunt may be correct in asserting that "the accomplishments of Haitian leaders who struggled against overwhelming odds to establish a government of their own played a major role in the development of pride and dignity among American blacks, who were bombarded with theories of racial inferiority and with discrimination in their own country" (p. 147), but the few examples provided are not really conclusive. Was Haiti's role really major? What did Black Americans know about Haiti and Haitian history in 1820, or in 1830, or on the eve of the Civil War? Did Black preachers and ministers publicize the achievements of the Haitians? What effect did the dismal failure of every scheme to settle Black Americans in Haiti have? How was adverse evaluation of Haiti and her citizens by the White press countered by free Blacks? Hunt's statement poses a whole series of questions which are not addressed.

Hunt's three-page "Epilogue" does little to give his work cohesion. We are left with five essays dealing with aspects of his general theme, and it is hard to find in them new ideas or interpretations. Most of his sources are secondary and well-known, although he does occasionally quote from interesting unpublished letters, diaries and archival material. His prose is clear and mercifully free of jargon. Louisiana State University Press is to be commended for having placed the footnotes where they belong, at the bottom of the page, and for having provided a name index, albeit incomplete. The absence of a Bibliography is regretted, as well as the spelling mistakes found in almost every one of the few

French titles mentioned, and the fact that in the only two references to Victor Hugo, his Black hero Bug-Jargal is rechristened Bar-Jargal, as if he had fought at Massada rather than at Cap-français.

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Drive to hegemony: the United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917. DAVID HEALY. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988. xi + 370 pp. (Cloth US \$27.50)

David Healy attempts to occupy the middle ground in his thoughtful new synthesis of the history of the United States' relations with the Caribbean republics during the period between its victory over Spain and its declaration of hostilities against the Central Powers in Europe. This was a seminal epoch in which Washington laid the foundations of its modern Caribbean policy. Clearly conscious of the historic failure of North American diplomacy in the region, and dissatisfied with recent scholarship that is based on Marxism and dependency theory, Healy adopts a centrist position that presents the ongoing conflict between Caribbean and North American interests and objectives as a problem of the dialectical relationship between human agency and sociopolitical structure.

Drive to Hegemony candidly reviews the racism, jingoism, and cultural chauvinism that placed obstacles in the path of harmony between the United States and its southern neighbors. The discussion of the impact of capital penetration, monoculture, and interventionism on Cuban society, for example, makes the exploitative character of those contacts plain. Yet, from the author's perspective, the nations of the Caribbean played a significant role in advancing American aims, and thus, their own oppression. Assertive elites acceded to the plans for uncontrolled exploitation, ambitious merchants looked forward to increased commerce, and the impoverished masses welcomed the Yankee dollar and the opportunity for remunerative employment as an alternative to the bleak drudgery of peasant existence. Northern efforts to increase trade and investment, and to thereby foster development, Healy contends, met little resistance from local populations.

These arguments, made at the end of the volume, constitute its most controversial aspect. The work for the most part reiterates a conventional account of U.S. relations with the Caribbean that will not be unfamiliar to

students of the subject, although the University of Wisconsin Press's handsome production gives the book a fresh, contemporary appearance. The evolution of policy from the William McKinley administration through that of Woodrow Wilson is described in the context of the United States' expanding national economic and military capabilities, which are contrasted to the limited resources and political instability of the small nations of the hemisphere.

With some notable exceptions, *Drive to Hegemony* makes rather spotty use of new work that has appeared in the last fifteen years. This treatment results in a study that, while updating such treatises as Dana G. Munro's (1964) examination of U.S.-Caribbean relations during the roughly same period by paying greater attention to the role of culture, ideology, and institutions in shaping foreign policy, nevertheless relies heavily on most of the same authorities, and ultimately evinces much of the same viewpoint, as the older, standard histories which unselfconsciously adopted Washington's cavalier perspective on regional affairs.

North Americans who study the history of U.S. relations with Latin America and the Caribbean have had to clear two hurdles. The first was the resistance of many diplomatic historians to the idea of examining society. Many wished to confine the field to the study of formal contacts between states, and perceived eclecticism as an improper deviation into other areas of history. Healy's attention to the social and cultural milieu in which the United States came to exercise dominion in the Caribbean indicates that he is indeed aware of, and interested in, the broader setting.

Historians face another obstacle that is rooted in the nature of the sources most readily available to them. The sheer volume of the U.S. archive and its comparative availability often overshadows less accessible works by foreigners and foreign governments. To this difficulty is added the general reluctance of many scholars to accept as legitimate the testimony of those outside their immediate culture, especially if those outsiders are also dissidents. This problem, combined with the adoption of a narrow definition of the history of foreign relations as discussed above, and a heavy reliance on Washington's official record, contributes to a historiography that often fails to dissociate itself from the program of the very actors it seeks to study. In cloaking itself in their world view, it serves rather than analyzes their objectives. *Drive to Hegemony* avoids the stumbling block constituted by a formalistic approach to the study of foreign relations, but does not quite succeed in discarding the orthodoxy imposed by the tacit assumption that, in the final analysis, the contours of U.S. Caribbean policy have been inevitable and somehow justifiable.

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The Caribbean and world politics: cross currents and cleavages. JORGE HEINE and LESLIE MANIGAT (eds.). New York and London: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1988. ix + 385 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.50)

This book is the product of the first major conference organized by the Caribbean Institute and Study Centre for Latin America (CISCLA) of the Inter-American University in San German, Puerto Rico during the dynamic directorship of Jorge Heine. The aim of the meeting was to review the international relations of the Caribbean at the end of two decades in which the region had been dramatically propelled into becoming one of the major arenas of international conflict. Unfortunately, the volume which has resulted is seriously marred by the long delay which took place between the holding of the conference (April 1983) and eventual publication (1988). One can readily understand the extent to which the U.S. invasion of Grenada in October 1983 caused problems for the editors and contributors, necessitating revision of virtually all the chapters, and it is only fair too to pay tribute to the careful and diligent editing which the book evinces. One of the editors, Leslie Manigat, has also been preoccupied in the interim with matters of state rather than scholarship, and the other, Heine himself, has since left CISCLA. Even so, it is clear that "Caribbean time" has served the project badly, giving the resultant volume an unavoidably dated air.

Heine makes up for this as best he can in his introduction by arguing that the invasion of Grenada "closed a decisive period in the region's history – a quarter of a century opened by the formation of the Federation of the West Indies in 1958 and the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and marked by the rapid transition from colonialism to independent nationhood in most of the English-speaking Caribbean territories" (p. 1). The book is thus transmuted into an analysis of Caribbean international relations up to and incorporating the impact of the events of October 1983, but not going beyond them. In this more limited sense, it is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to the literature. The "team," as

assembled by the editors, contains many well-known figures in the field and their contributions are mostly sound and well-judged. The organization of the material into different parts is sensibly done and a most welcome innovation is the preparation by Jorge Heine of a comprehensive bibliographic guide to the literature on Caribbean international relations produced between 1959 and 1984. This will be of real assistance to teachers of courses in this field.

Turning to the particular contributions, Part I on geopolitics and international political economy contains four chapters. Leslie Manigat opens with a wordy elucidation of the "*problématique* of complexity" (p. 25) which in his view is at the heart of the Caribbean's geopolitical situation. His tone ranges from the banal to the clever but is never less than interesting. Carl Stone follows with a masterly dissection of the different types of insertion into the world economy represented in the Caribbean. Five categories are discerned: traditional export trading with Europe on the basis of an undiversified domestic economy (e.g. St Lucia); plantation agriculture with new export earners based on foreign investment combined with a moderately diversified economy tied to the U.S. (e.g. Jamaica); new export and foreign exchange earners consequent on the demise of the plantation sector (e.g. the Bahamas); export agriculture based on transformed social relations combined with partial economic diversification and integration into the world socialist system (e.g. Cuba); and peasant agriculture with a low level of incorporation into the world economy (e.g. Haiti). In this model Trinidad and Tobago is an example of the second type, although exceptional to the extent that it is an oil-producer. This dimension of the political economy of the region, with all the attendant opportunities and problems thereby posed for projects such as regional economic integration, is capably analysed by Trevor Farrell. He concludes tellingly that "there was a considerable failure" on the part of the countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean (his particular focus) "to recognize and understand the dynamics of what was taking place in international and regional oil markets" (p. 128) in the 1970s and early 1980s. The one disappointing chapter in this first part in fact specifically concerns the regional issue, namely Mirlande Manigat's analysis of "Caricom at Ten", which demonstrates no awareness of the considerable literature on the emergence and record of the Caribbean Community (much of which, incidentally, is listed and discussed in her own editor's bibliographic guide).

Part II claims to address cases and courses of Caribbean foreign policy. In this vein Vaughan Lewis offers a short, but typically reflective, overview of the external economic and political relations of the Caricom states in the 1970s and Paul Ashley gives a more extended discussion of the changes introduced into Jamaican foreign policy as the Manley government of the 1970s was replaced by the Seaga regime in the 1980s. The other two chapters in the section are, however, differently conceived. Jean Crusol ponders why it is that the three

French overseas *départements* in the Caribbean have not developed powerful independence movements and stresses, *inter alia*, the effect of the growth of local state apparatuses in drawing an important part of the active population of these territories into public employment and thus defence of the *status quo*. Leslie Manigat then returns to describe the events leading up to the revolutionary crisis and subsequent invasion in Grenada in 1983 but adds little, if anything, to the voluminous writings which are already in existence on these matters. In short, at the end of the section it is not possible to come to any general conclusions about the trajectory or efficacy of Caribbean foreign policy in the period under study.

The third part of the book can be dealt with more briefly. It considers the role of "middle powers" in Caribbean international relations and covers three such examples: Canada (in the hands of Kari Levitt), Colombia (Fernando Cepeda) and Brazil (Mirlande Manigat again). The surveys are short but useful, but one is bound to wonder what happened to Mexico and Venezuela, and even Britain and France? One of the features of Caribbean international affairs is the number of the powers with interests in the region and one would have thought that other chapters in the volume (including some already discussed) could have been shortened without loss in order to provide the reader with a fuller coverage of this important dimension.

Part IV turns finally to the United States and its pre-eminent position in the management of the modern Caribbean. Edward Gonzalez does a neat job setting out the strategic interests of the U.S., as conventionally understood, although it should be noted that his analysis is not one that has been revised to take account of the Grenada invasion. After this, Robert Pastor draws on his substantial research into Caribbean emigration and U.S. immigration policy towards the region to argue for a greater sensitivity on the part of the U.S. in handling this aspect of its relationship with the Caribbean, and then Anthony Maingot discusses the role of Miami and the state of Florida as a part of the Caribbean. The latter is one of the highlights of the book, a completely original attempt to set out and analyse what the author calls "the infrastructure of a 'Caribbean' city" (p. 332). Transnational links between the U.S. and the Caribbean – of all sorts, both legal and illegal – flow through Dade County in ever-accelerating fashion. As Maingot says, "Florida and Miami, in particular, are slowly becoming an integral part of the Caribbean; it receives its citizens, of all classes, and it receives its investment and flight capital. It sells them everything from corn flakes to complete factories" (p. 326).

All in all, then, there is much to be enjoyed and gained from this book. It is just a pity, as indicated earlier, that we were not able to read it a couple of years ago!

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The Caribbean in world affairs: the foreign policies of the English-speaking states. JACQUELINE ANNE BRAVEBOY-WAGNER. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1989. vii + 244 pp. (Paper US \$25.95)

This is not, in the author's own words, an attempt to supply new information concerning the external activities of the English-speaking Caribbean countries. Her goal is to integrate the known information "into an analytical framework or model as a first step toward theory building" (p. ix). Expanding further on her goals, the author is quite explicit that the book is not about description; she intends to complement the descriptive works on the Caribbean already in existence. "The book," she clarifies, "is also intended to reach the broader audience of those interested in small-state foreign policy in general, that is, those persons to whom the formulation of a model is useful in facilitating comparisons with other countries of similar size" (p. ix). As if to signify her interest in contributing to policy, she adds further that while her interest is not "grand theory," she does hope to "modify existing middle-range theories of international relations to suit the Caribbean region" (p. ix).

Since the author herself has defined such a high set of aims, the first question has to be, how well does she fulfill those theoretical goals? Unfortunately, the answer is that she does so poorly. In fact, theory building is not where the strength of this work lies. It is in the description of the twelve West Indian nations' mechanics and instruments of diplomacy that the book is at its best. The author understands the area, is sympathetic to its situation as small nations in the world community, but never condescending in her evaluations of their strengths and weaknesses as states. On the other hand, the analysis is at its most confusing when the author attempts to interpret the foreign policy of these small yet complex states through a multitude of models, conceptual frameworks or theories of international relations. The fact that she is well acquainted with this theoretical literature is not in doubt. The question is whether all this theoretical knowledge helps the author make her factual descriptions clearer, her analytical arguments sharper, her conclusions more convincing. The answer has to be no.

Consider, for instance, one of the author's central conclusions, that the Caribbean states are not simply puppets or pawns in the East-West game, but

rather have "a wide range of foreign policy actions and a similar wide range of foreign policy influences" (p. 227). Does her empirical analysis support such a conclusion? The record is confusing. After a review of the theoretical literature on the meaning of abstentions in voting at the U.N., she tells us that the high levels of West Indian abstention point to "high levels of pro-U.S. clientelism" (p. 132). Later, however, in an analysis unencumbered by "theory," she reveals a low voting coincidence in the U.N. between these states and the U.S.A. This leads her to conclude that "Not only did the Caribbean join the rest of the Third World on economic issues but also their political stances were more antagonistic to the United States" (p. 141). Again, her very insightful case study of West Indian decision-making during the Granada crisis begins with a review of the theoretical literature on crisis decision-making. She concludes that the West Indian leaders behaved as described in Graham T. Allison's concept of "group think," i.e. as a cozy club of friends unwilling to disagree with each other (p. 189). Later, however, she tells us that public pressure in favor of intervention was enormous: "In the circumstances, decision-makers probably concluded – correctly it turned out – that the public would approve a decisive action such as the one contemplated" (p. 192).

It is a pity that the author allowed her discussion of international relations theory to sidetrack her analysis. Theory is supposed to clarify, not obfuscate. It is a real loss to the reader, for instance, that none of the models presented help him or her analyze further the many insightful and often analytically suggestive ideas which the author presents. Such is the case, for example, with the one which closes Chapter Five: "By the late 1980's, with several new faces at the helm of Caricom states, harmony and cooperation were being stressed, and Eastern Caribbean states were moving to cement their diplomatic and economic relationship with a possible political union" (p. 149). Because the author is concerned with a synchronic analysis of specific policy areas and not with time frames and chronological development, it is impossible to place such a dramatic conclusion within historical context. When did this process of cooperation start, who or what are the driving forces, are they structural or do they respond to that fact which the author continuously emphasises, the dominant role of personalities in West Indian foreign policy making? What, in the final analysis, is the validity of such a conclusion? There are no answers here for these types of questions.

This is a clear case where overconceptualization reduces the value of what generally is a useful book.

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De Surinaamse constitutionele orde. H.F. MUNNEKE. Nijmegen, The Netherlands: Ars Aequi Libri, 1990. v + 120 pp. (Paper Dfl. 24.95)

Like many other newly independent states, Suriname has gotten off to a rocky start, experiencing a military coup, international isolation, near economic collapse, ethnic conflict and guerrilla war, and most recently an effort at redemocratization. H.F. Munneke, a lawyer teaching Caribbean Law and Government in the Van Vollenhoven Institute of Studies in Non-Western Law and Government in Leiden, has taken the two constitutions of Suriname (1975 and 1987) and gathered up the decree law of the intervening military period (1980-87) in the form of a "third constitution." The result is a study in contradiction and ambiguity, only a few dimensions of which are brought out in the author's brief accompanying commentary.

Of greatest significance – and uncertainty – is the position of the military. Retreating from the veto power it had exercised over everything in the interregnum, it is still assigned a "vanguard" role in the 1987 Constitution, charged "to protect the highest rights and freedoms of the land and people," and to work for "the national development and liberation of the nation" (Art. 177). Nevertheless, according to Munneke, the absence of a place for the military in any policy-making structures (other than a new State Council (*Staatsraad*) and an emergency National Security Council, to be convened only in the event of a state of war) may limit that threat. The power to control (or disrupt), however, need not require formal positions of influence within the lines of authority. The Latin American experience demonstrates that "Ba Uzi" (Brother Uzi) is quite enough.

Munneke notes that the military interlude redirected politics in a heavily programmatic way. This is reflected in the 1987 Constitution's Preamble and first eight chapters (Arts. 1-51). Nevertheless, there is a discrepancy between the strong socialist and anticolonial principles enunciated in the Preamble and its statement of International Principles (Art. 7) and the moderate set of more specific social and economic goals in Articles 24-51. Here, as well as in other sections of the present Constitution, Suriname's old political parties engaged in a bitter tug-of-words with the military and its radically inclined civilian allies.

The prospects for confusion – and conflict – are great. One sign of this is the structural design of the new government. The 1975 Constitution produced a straightforward parliamentary system. In contrast, from 1980 to 1987, ministers came and went at the discretion of Desi Bouterse, head of the military. This power continued even after reintroduction of a National Assembly in 1985. In the present Constitution, the President and "the Government" (comprising President, Vice-President, and Council of Ministers) are chosen by and accountable to the National Assembly. Yet the Vice-President (chairing the

Council of Ministers) and each minister's Under-Minister are accountable to the President. This arrangement suggests all kinds of scenarios for crises of confidence in one or another part of the Government. This is compounded by the 1987 Constitution's failure to mention individual ministerial responsibility to the Assembly – a tradition developed well before the 1975 Constitution. But Munneke suggests that carry-over is implied where an established practice is neither outlawed nor replaced.

Just as the multidirectionality of accountability could be expected to produce strains between legislative and executive structures, those strains themselves may have been intended to produce a wider base of agreement than was required under the 1975 document. Indeed, one of the causes for the military coup was public disenchantment with the party polarization that occurred under simple majoritarianism. By investing the President (chosen by two-thirds majority) with these heightened powers, a narrow base of government is no longer feasible.

Unfortunately, the author declines to discuss the President's State Council because of its apparent novelty. Yet it is not really so novel. It evolved from the largely honorific Advisory Council of 1975 (and earlier) through the several powerful bodies chaired by Bouterse in the 1980-87 period to oversee the Council of Ministers. In the present Constitution the *Staatsraad* has great potential power: to oversee the Government's performance of its work; to suspend decisions that conflict with the Constitution, "the Government's Program," or "the law"; to be consulted in drafting new laws; and, among other things, to call for popular mobilization if the national interest demands (Art. 115). The present Government, dominated by the old political parties, seemed loath to convene this new body at all, probably because in the first governing period (1987-92) the military was guaranteed a seat on it. Yet by 1989 it had been assembled and was carefully being used as a nonparty source of legitimation for government actions.

Suriname's redemocratization remains an uncertain, open-ended process. Yet for those interested in following its course, the materials in this volume will be very handy.

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Colonialism and resistance in Belize: essays in historical sociology. O. NIGEL BOLLAND. Benque Viejo del Carmen, Belize: Cubola Productions / Institute of Social and Economic Research / Society for the Promotion of Education and Research, 1989. ix + 218 pp. (Paper US \$10.00)

A compilation of essays by one of the more prolific scholars working in Belize, this is "...not just another 'history of Belize'" (p. 2). Rather, Bolland has chosen to investigate in depth a limited number of key topics, with the aim of setting some guideposts for further forays into the Belizean past. The nine essays cover a wide range of material: from the structure of eighteenth-century social relations and the distinctiveness of Belizean slavery to British-Maya relations, post-emancipation labor practices, and the problems of national integration in the post-colonial period.

Central to Bolland's argument is the premise that Belizean social history has been constituted out of a struggle between the structures of colonialism and the resistance of subordinate, colonized peoples. Written over a period of sixteen years, all the pieces emphasize the ways in which subordinate groups – whether African slaves, Mayan villagers, or "free" laborers – contested and in some cases, altered the rule of local and metropolitan elites.

In the introductory essay, the only one written expressly for this volume, Bolland elaborates both a theory of history and a methodology for investigating it. "Dialectical theory" serves as an organizing principle for understanding the nature of social change and the relation of history to sociology, as well as providing an appropriate framework for the study of Caribbean social history. An emphasis on conflict as source of social change centers attention on the variety of responses to domination that constitute crucial dimensions of colonial and neo-colonial encounters. Dialectical theory is seen as a means of working toward what Bolland refers to as a "total history," a trans-disciplinary understanding of the interrelationship between all relevant factors in constantly changing social systems (p. 9).

While Bolland's focus on dynamic tensions at a variety of analytical levels is quite effective in rendering some of the complexities of Belizean historical reality, he does not completely discuss a number of issues raised in the introduction. The concept of resistance, for example, embraces "countless acts of self-assertion" as well as more obvious instances of rebellion (p. 7). This broad definition, while helpful in focusing our attention on the long-neglected struggles of colonized peoples, could use some refinement. Although resistance to oppression need to take an overt form, the determination of intention and context is crucial in distinguishing the meaning, extent, and effectiveness of resistance, especially in a constantly changing social order. Between domination and resistance lie acquiescence, accomodation, and reform-activities essential to

both cultural synthesis and the reproduction of society. Other areas that could have received greater elaboration include the use of Gramsci's concept of hegemony, and the theoretical and methodological problems involved in achieving a "total history."

The remainder of the book is divided into four parts arranged in topical-chronological order. Each section dispels a particular aspect of colonial historical mythology, while at the same time placing Belize in comparative perspective with the rest of the Caribbean.

The first part consists of three essays dealing with "The Early Settlement, Slavery, and Creole Culture." In these pieces, which span the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Bolland draws a picture structurally similar to that of the West Indies: a society dedicated to mono-production for the export market, rigidly stratified by race, and dominated by a small group of whites who owned most of the land and the slaves, and controlled the institutional apparatus.

While Belize shared a common legal and cultural tradition with the sugar-producing colonies of the British West Indies, the conditions of timber extraction implied substantial differences in settlement patterns, conditions of production, and everyday existence. Yet Bolland argues against the colonial myth that Belizean slavery was more benevolent than that found in other territories. Belizean slavery was a dehumanizing and oppressive system, albeit imperfectly so. Through assertive actions, rather than their masters' benevolence, slaves were able to effect some change and gain control over certain aspects of their family and community life. In this manner, they had greater freedom than elsewhere to synthesize African cultural forms to the conditions of slavery and thus make an important contribution to the emergence of Creole culture.

The second part of the book deals with the changing patterns of British-Maya relations in the nineteenth century. Drawing on archeological, archival, and ethnohistorical sources, Bolland refutes the received colonial wisdom of the "disappearance" of the Maya during the early colonial era. Instead, he shows how they were displaced and dispossessed by the expansion of British mahogany interests in the early part of the nineteenth century. A period of violent resistance to British rule – ultimately put down by military force – followed. Maya defeat, however, resulted in a system of indirect rule – the *alcalde* system – which adapted traditional community forms to the needs of the colonial state. The emergence of the *alcalde* system paralleled another major transformation in British-Maya relations. Although indirect rule gave them control over community life, the Maya were denied the right to own land and were drawn into wage labor in forestry and the newly-emerging agricultural plantations in the northern districts.

Labor control and resistance in the century following Emancipation form the subject matter of the book's third part. Bolland illustrates that monopolistic

control over land and labor was not broken until the Great Depression, despite a shift in monopoly ownership from the local white settler oligarchy to metropolitan-based enterprises. Regardless of who ruled, the majority of Belizean people were kept poor, dependent, and powerless through "pernicious debt practices" and disenfranchisement. Resistance took the form of periodic disturbances in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and peaked in the 1930's after the Depression and a major hurricane had devastated the colony's economy. Although Belize has generally been left out of studies of Caribbean labor movements, it was, Bolland shows, one of the first Caribbean territories to undergo widespread labor unrest. The resultant grass roots mobilization helped fuel an independence movement that was given shape by middle class leaders a decade later.

An essay on race, ethnicity, and national integration comprises the final part of the book. Beginning with a brief theoretical discussion of the fluid nature of ethnic and racial identities, Bolland then demonstrates the inadequacy of the "plural society" model to account for cross-cutting patterns of language, religion, class in an ethnically-diverse Belize. Instead, the author emphasizes the shifting patterns of alliance and identity brought about by education, economic interest, and, especially, politics. He views the basic problems of Belize as arising not from racial-ethnic tensions, but from continued economic dependence and intensified United States influence. There is a danger that these conditions "... may give rise to social tensions that could all too easily be translated into inter-ethnic rivalry and competition" (p. 202). Bolland concludes that although intensified racial and ethnic conflict is not inevitable, Belizeans must make a sustained effort to insure that these tensions are not institutionalized in the political system.

This is a valuable collection for all scholars concerned with the Caribbean and Central America. While one of the author's intentions is to make Belizean social history more "...accessible to a wider audience in the Caribbean than may have studied Belize hitherto" (p. vii), the significance of the book for Belizeans may be greater still. Belize has long suffered, by reason of its dependent relation with the outside world, from a generalized scarcity of books. Imported texts, especially scholarly ones pertaining to the country itself, have been infrequently available and extremely costly. Local publishing has traditionally been extremely limited and of variable quality. Thus, the publication of this volume by a local concern – Cubola Productions – in a collaborative effort with the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) and the Society for the Promotion of Education and Research (SPEAR) is quite significant. It means that the book will be accessible to Belizean readers. As such, the book could also be of use

in the advanced levels of the school system – although a number of the views contained within are certain to spark lively debate within the society at large.

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Trinidad and Tobago: the independence experience, 1962-1987. SELWYN RYAN (ed.). St. Augustine, Trinidad: ISER, 1988. xxiii + 599 pp. (Paper, Price not available)

On August 31st, 1987 Trinidad and Tobago celebrated its twenty fifth anniversary of political independence. For all but the last year of this period, Trinidad was ruled by the Peoples' National Movement (PNM), led by Dr. Eric Williams until his death in 1981. The period began with a solid consolidation of independence, until the explosion into the February Revolution of 1970. Trinidad rode the crest of the oil wave with its "petro dollars" until the early 1980's, only to collapse again, primarily as a consequence of decline in the petroleum-led economy.

Ryan's text is billed as a "Retrospective" of the first twenty five years. It resulted from a conference held at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, which brought together academics, public policy makers and businessmen, many of whom, in one way or another, contributed significantly to shaping that twenty five year experience. Twenty one papers and six commentaries presented at the conference were reproduced in the text. The appendices includes detailed data on elections since 1956; national income and unemployment statistics, and a concluding section on state enterprises. The presentations are conveniently grouped into three sections: economics, politics and public policy.

A major objective of the publication is a review of the development experience over the first twenty five years of independence, seeking to determine, implicitly, whether progress has been experienced. In effect, development is defined in terms of progress. Immediately some problems are apparent, for among conference participants and contributors to the text are Rampersad, Barsotti and Alleyne, all of who occupied senior policy-making positions over the period. Could scholarly objectivity be expected?

The first section analyzes the economic development experience. Papers presented by Rampersad, Alleyne and Dennis Pantin are well done – if not overdone! Rampersad, for instance, concludes that "on the whole, the development experience appears to have been good" (p. 16). Basing this

conclusion on quality of life issues it is difficult to contradict him. The innovative Physical Quality of Life measuring Index, ranging from 0 to 100 scores Trinidad at 83 in 1970, increasing to 88 by 1980 and it is estimated at approximately 92 today. Yet Rampersad concedes that the economy is one of the most open in the world; unemployment remains a persistent problem, while national debt continues to rise.

Alleyne in his turn asks more fundamental questions concerning the development experience. He separates the issue of growth from that of development. He emphasizes some internal factors: human ingenuity, inventiveness and skills which are important to the development process, implying that Trinidad is yet deficient in many of these areas. He, like many others introduces the major problem of the work ethic. Finally, he contrasts income distribution with per capita, as each is employed to measure development gains.

The issue of income distribution is cogently analyzed in one of the most important papers, that by economist Ralph Henry. One is left to wonder why that excellent paper, and Rudder's provocative presentation, were together not included in section one. Henry concluded that within the limits the PNM government had set for itself, there has been some movement toward income equity. Yet, he emphasized, the plural nature of Trinidad's social structure and the openness of the economy demanded radical restructuring of economic life to facilitate even greater movement toward equity. Like others, Henry recognizes that the PNM was unwilling to go that route.

The issue of why traditional economic structures were not confronted was asked, repeatedly, by economist Farrell in his commentary. To which Barsotti, himself a former senior policy maker responded: He too had asked, why!

The politics of development appears as the underlying theme of section two. Ryan's contribution stands out as one of the most important in the text. His is a thorough survey of twenty four years of PNM's rule, giving credit where he believes it is due, but equally critical of PNM's overall performance. Appropriately, he judges the PNM on the goals that the party itself had established from its inception in 1956. He concludes that according to these standards, the party's performance was marked by failure. Yet, he rationalizes, this is partly because the original goals were themselves too lofty in the first place. He credits the PNM with creating a political culture which encouraged open participation; the guarantee to all their basic rights and freedom; and important advances in education. Yet, in the final analysis, Ryan concludes "the politics of power took precedence over the politics of transformation" (p. 157).

Wiltshire-Brodber seeks to do for foreign policy what Ryan achieves at the domestic level, that is, to provide a summary and a critique; and overall she achieves her purpose. In turn Ellis Clarke, if nothing else, demonstrates the importance of personality in decision-making for a mini-state.

Papers by Tewairie in section two, and by Lovelace, Mohammed and Reddock in part three, emphasize the roles of religion, culture and women in the development process, over the twenty five year. Yet, Tewarie's paper can hardly be considered a retrospective since much of his effort is directed toward convincing the Hindu population that they should reduce their expectations from the present NAR government. In a discussion of the value of "indigenous" traditions, Lovelace, in a peculiar presentation, emphasizes the "African" antecedents, to the neglect of all others. What he fails to realize, to paraphrase Black Stalin, is that having come by different ships, Trinidadians have all ended up in the same boat. Yet that boat is not purely of African foundations.

Ryan and his group undertook a huge task at the initial conference. To reduce the proceeding into a single, coherent text, had to have been even more challenging. With few significant issues excluded: the crisis of the early 1970's, analysis of the decline of the mid-1980's, the text has covered all the major bases. This book is important, not only because it synthesizes the development experience of the first twenty five years, but equally, because it provides some basis for confronting the decade of the 1990's. For it is during this decade that the society must deal with basic economic and social problems, glossed over in the past, to prevent that period from being one of decay.

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Grass roots commitment: basketball and society in Trinidad and Tobago. JAY MANDLE and JOAN MANDLE. Parkersburg, Iowa: Caribbean Books, 1988. ix + 75 pp. (Paper US \$7.00)

There is a fast-growing literature on Caribbean sports. C.L.R. James' (1963) now classic study of cricket may have started it, but it is no longer confined to that sport or the English-speaking Caribbean.

The Mandles have contributed to this new wave of sports scholarship with a timely and interesting monograph on basketball in Trinidad and Tobago. On the basis of ethnographic visits to the islands for two and a half years, they have compiled a short monograph that seeks to assess Trinidad-Tobago society through sport. Hence, the study of basketball reflects larger societal structures and processes.

While originally played by the ethnically distinct – and economically more well-heeled – Chinese and Lebanese, basketball has become more popular with

Trinidad-Tobago's more numerous and disenfranchized Blacks. U.S. origins of the game is also central here, and the authors look at the role of cultural dependency (upon the U.S.) versus controlled acceptance of foreign culture. They argue that, despite strong U.S. influences, the people of Trinidad and Tobago control the game. Having acknowledged both the foreign origins and domination of the game, the authors nonetheless feel that Trinidadians and Tobagonians are empowered by playing basketball, and that this empowerment stems from grass-roots organization and play. If anything, local control is underscored by the predominance of Blacks in the game in the U.S., and the pervasive influence of televised games on the islands.

The racial makeup of the teams receives a class analysis. The Mandles point out that other sports (cricket) and sports clubs tend to be the domain of the more well-heeled; while basketball has become the game of the poor. With their identification with Black U.S. players, the Blacks of Trinidad and Tobago are further able to associate the game as theirs. This is the main message of the monograph: namely that basketball is a vehicle for looking at the lower class, a means by which the underclass can become more cohesive, more culturally empowered.

Regional differences within Trinidad and Tobago are also examined. Trinidad is significantly more developed than Tobago, a fact not lost on Tobagans who accuse their neighboring countrymen of taking the lion's share of basketball resources. Trinidadians are also grossly overrepresented on the national teams. The Mandles noted that Tobagonians, while less developed, were more community-minded at games. Studying fan behavior, they saw Tobagonians as better dressed, more orderly, and family oriented than their rowdier Trinidadian counterparts. On the other hand, Trinidadians men basketballers regularly beat their Tobagonian rivals.

In studying intra-island and regional differences the Mandles point to gender as a particularly revealing feature of both the game and the society. Women basketball players are overwhelmingly black, 18-30 years of age, and poor, just like the male players. But unlike the men, Tobagonian women players are superior to Trinidadian women on the court. Reasons suggested by the authors again have to do with differential economic development. Tobago's women are better organized and play more, in part, because of their overall position in society. Tobago being more remote and less developed than Trinidad, its women are more traditional, which affords them a broader range of acceptable sex-role behavior. Simply put, they are not as fettered by the "Western" notion of what women ought to be as are Trinidadian women. Women on Tobago fought (against men) for the right to play, but their assertiveness is viewed by men on the island as falling within the domain of acceptable female behavior.

Finally, the authors examine patron-client relations, of which they find evidence in the distribution of revenues around the leagues. Members of the more privileged class are typically in a position to distribute funds to lower level members of the league in return for political loyalty. However, a key element of the complex of clientism is missing, namely the passivity on the part of the clients. The Mandles point out how the grass-roots nature of the game makes for considerable expression of dissatisfaction, and in so doing shortcircuits any true clientism. They argue that, in final analysis, the vital and vocal nature of the local game reflects an underclass that is politically disenfranchised, but culturally alive. A key shortcoming in all of this is the implicit argument for cultural/political resistance. A more explicit argument for resistance could have been more forcefully drawn from the data.

In the game, local people exhibit a degree of control over their lives, hence the game can reflect their desire to resist their material/political conditions. There is a growing field of such studies (Scott 1983; Rhoden 1980; LaFrance 1985), including my own work in nearby Dominican Republic (Klein 1989), which seeks to take the notion of cultural resistance further than the Mandles have. Their study, however, lends itself nicely to the resistance perspective by simultaneously showing both local control and vitality in the sport and the influence exerted by the U.S. in the game.

The overall strengths of this book are its clear and accomplished modest aims, and its brevity. While much rich ethnography has not found its way into this monograph, what has is used with a careful eye to making and demonstrating how society is reflected in the game of basketball. Here the Mandles have succeeded wonderfully, and the short nature of the monograph calls for its use in university classes as supplementary reading (a growing concern since the days of escalating book costs). In this slim volume the Mandles have added a valuable contribution to the fields of sport sociology, popular culture, and Caribbean studies.

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